



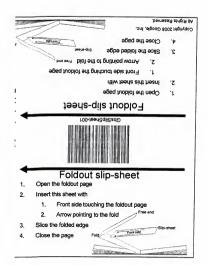
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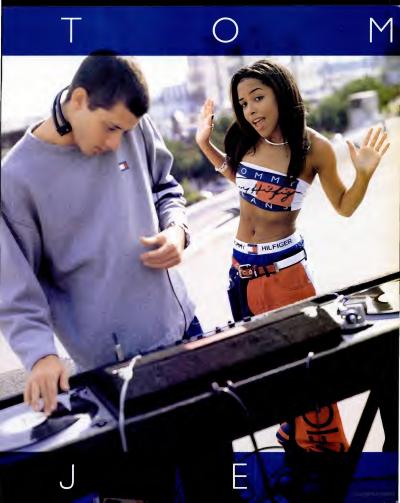
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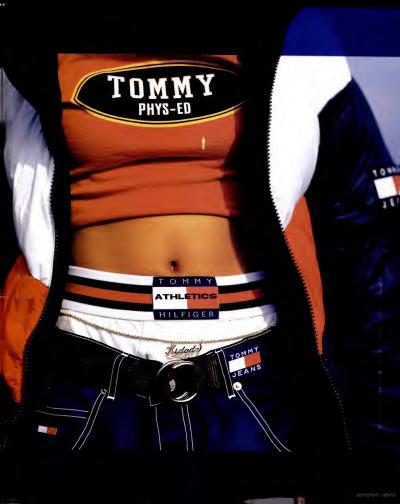


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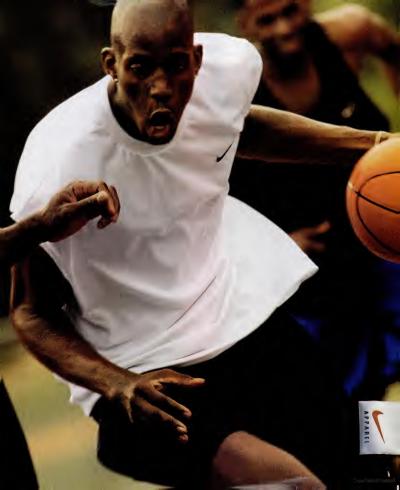
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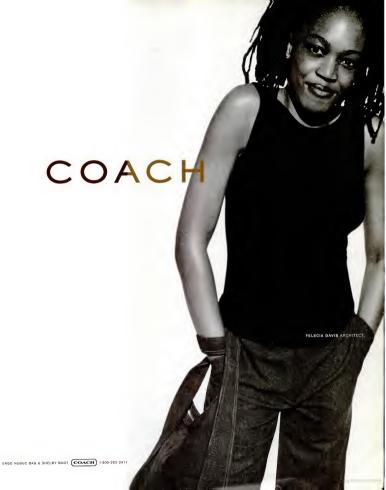
# CRAM

INTO A SEVEN FOOT FRAME.

Whether you're tail enough to goal tend with your head or not, one hour of basketball will leave you drenched in sweat. That's why we made Drl-ELT, part of the NIKE FLT. line of apparel. Drl-FLT. fabric is designed to pull sweat away from your body so it evaporates faster. Consequently, you're drier and more comfortable. And if you keep growing, don't worry. Drl-ELT. clothes make really good hand-me-downs.

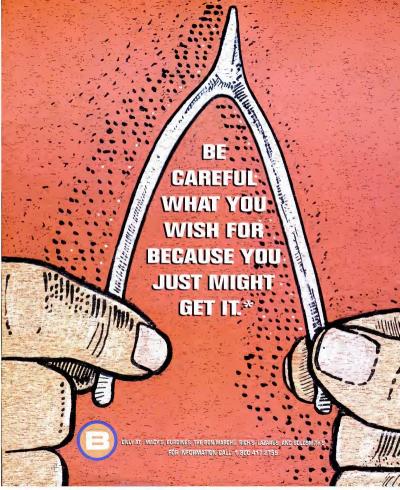














## In the battle against HIV,



### If you're HIV+, you know the feeling.

You're at war with an unseen and dangerous enemy. Everything's at stake — your health, your peace of mind, and your expectations for the future.

### It's time to strengthen your attack.

Viral load testing, now available from your doctor, identifies the amount of active virus in your body — and is considered to be an important indicator of disease progression, together with CD4 T-cell counts.

The best way to reduce the build-up of HIV is to maintain a low viral load.

### CRIXIVAN significantly decreases viral load in many patients.

CRIXIVAD provides powerful HIV suppression through protesse inhibition. In some patients, CRIXIVAN has lowered the amount of HIV in the bloodstream to levels understable by available testing. (Note: The clinical significance of changes in serum viral RNA measurement during treatment with CRIXIVAN has not been established. Also, the virus may still be present in other organ systems.)

CRIXIVAN also increases CD4T-cell levels in many patients.
With less virus to repel, the immune system produces more disease fighting CD4T-cells.



### there's a change in outlook.

CRIXIVAN is generally well tolerated and is currently the most widely prescribed\* protease inhibitor medication.

Some patients treasted with CRIXIVAN in clinical trials developed kidney stones. This occurred in about 4% of patients. Since CRIXIVAN has been marketed, other side effects have been reported, including rapid breakdown of red blood cells and kidney stones sometimes with kidney failure. Drinking at least 6 glasses of liquid each day may help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. In some patients with homophilis, increased bleeding has been associated with protease inhibition treatments. Also, there are some common medications and some AIDS-related medications you should not take with CRIXIVANI. Make sure your healthcare provider knows about all medications you are taking or plan to take.

### Every day is an opportunity to fight back.

Educate yourself with knowledge about nutrition, fitness, and treatment developments that can help you lighten your load and manage the virus.

Important Considerations: CRIXIVAN is a protease inhibitor that is indicated for the treatment of HIV infection in adults when antiretroviral therapy is warranted. It is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CRIXIVAN may still develop infections or other conditions associated with HIV. Therefore, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. It is not yet known whether taking CRIXIVAN will extend your life or reduce your chances of getting other lillnesses associated with HIV. Information about how well the drug work is available from clinical studies up to 24 weeks.

For additional information on CRIXIVAN, please read the patient package insert provided on the following page of this ad.

Remember to ask your doctor about CRIXIVAN.



Focus on the rest of your life.



### Patient information about CRIXIVAN (VRIV.clb.van)

Please read this information before you start taking CRDIVAN. Also, you should read the information included with CRDIVAN each time you receive your prescription, just in case anything has changed Remember, this information does not take the place of careful discussions with your doctor. You and your doctor should discuss CR07AAN when you start taking your medication and at regular checkups. You should remain under a doctor's care when using CRDWWN and should not change or stop treatment without first talking with your doctor.

### What is CRIXIVAN?

CROWNN is an oral capsule used for the treatment of adults with HIV (Human Immunodefficie Virus) when therapy is warranted. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (acquired Immune defficie syndrome). CROWNN is a new type of HIV drug called a probase (PRO-tea-see) inhibitor.

### How does CRIXIVAN work?

CRIDINAN is a protease inhibitor that fights HIV. It may help lower the amount of HIV in your body lealed "viral load") and raise your CD4 (T) cell count.

CRIDIVAN may be prescribed alone. CRIDIVAN may also be prescribed with other anti-HIV drugs such as ZDV (also carled AZT), 3TC, ddi, ddC, or d4T. CRIXVAN works differently from these other anti-HIV drugs. Talk with your doctor to see if you should take CRIXVAN along or with other anti-HIV drugs.

### CRONWN has been studied in adults. It has not been studied in children and advissorate How should I take CRIXIVAN?

### There are six important things you must do to help you benefit from CRIXIVAN:

 Take CRIXINAN capsules every day as prescribed by year doctor. Continue taking CRIXINN unless
your doctor fells you to stop. Take the react amount of CRIXINN that your doctor tells you to take, not if from the very start. To help make sure you will benefit from CRXWAN, you must not skip doses or take "drug. holidays," If you don't take CROWAN as prescribed, the activity of CROWAN may be reduced idue to resis-

- 2. Take CRIXIYAN capsules every 8 hours around the clock, every day. It may be easier to reber to take CROWAN if you take it at the same time every day, if you have questions about when to take CRIXIVAN, your doctor or health care provider can help you decide what schedule works for you
- If you miss a dose by more than 2 hours, wait and then take the next dose at the regula scheduled time. However, if you miss a dose by less than 2 hours, take your missed dose immedia ly. Then take your next dose at the regularly scheduled time. Do not take more or less than your prescribed dose of CRDGVAN at any one time.
- 4. Take CRIXIVAN with water. You can also take CRIXIVAN with other hoverages such as skim milk, knice coffee, or tea.
- Ideally, take each dose of CRIXINAN without food but with water at least one hour before or two hours after a meal. Or you can take CRIXINAN with a jobt meal. Examples of light meals include: - dry toast with infly juice, and coffee (with skim milk and sugar if you want)

- corn flakes with skim milk and sugar Do not take CRDSVAN at the same time as any meals that are high in calories, fat, and prote (for example - a bacon and egg breakfast). When taken at the same time as CRDWAN, these foods can

interfere with CRIXIVAN being absorbed into your bloodstream and may lessen its effect. Drink at least six 8-ounce glasses of liquids (preferably water) throughout the day, every day, CRIXDYAN has caused kidney stones in some patients. By taving enough fluids in your body you may help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health care

### provider if you develop kidney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine. Done CRIXIVAN cure HIV or AIDS2

CROONAN is not a cure for HIV or AIDS. People taking CROONAN may still develop infections or other condtions associated with HV Because of this, it is very important for you to remain under the care of a doctor. It is not yet known whether taking CRXWAN will extend your life or reduce your chances of getting other IIInesses associated with HIV. Information about how well the drug works is available from clinical studies up

### Does CRIXIVAN reduce the risk of passing HIV to others? CROWAN has not been shown to reduce the risk of passing HW to others through sexual contact or blood

Who should not take CRIXIVAN? Do not take CRISSAN if you have had a serious allernic reaction to CRISSAN or any of its commonwis-

What other medical problems or conditions should I discuss with my doctor? Talk to your doctor if:

- · You are pregnant or if you become pregnant while you are taking CRDIVAN. We do not yet know how CRXNAN affects pregnant women or their developing babies.
- You are breast-feeding. You should stop breast-feeding if you are taking CRXWAN. Also talk to your doctor about
- . Problems with your liver, especially if you have mild or moderate liver disease caused by cirrhosis
- · Problems with your lodneys
- Any medicines you are taking or plan to take, including non-prescription medicines.

### Can CRIXIVAN be taken with other medications?\*

Drugs you should not take with CRIXIVAN: SELDANE's bedroodnet HISMAN HSMANAI \* (astemizale) VERSED® (midsonlam) HM CION\* (trazolam) PROPILISIO<sup>®</sup> (disposide)

Taking CRIXIVAN with the above medications could result in serious or life-threatening problems (such as immular heartheat or expessive sleenings) in addition, you should not take CROWAN with rifampin, known as RIFADIN\*. RIFAMATE\*. RIFATER\*. OF RIMACTANE

### Drugs you can take with CREXIVAN include RETROVIR® (vidowrdine, ZDV also called AZT)

TAGAMET® (cimetidine) isoniazid (MH) DIFLUCAN® (fluconazole) ORTHO-NOVUM 1/35° (oral contraceptive) FPMR" famination 3TC ZERIT<sup>®</sup> (stavudine, d4T)

BIAXIN® (clarithromycin)

BACTRIM\*/SEPTRA\* (trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole) VIDEO" (didenosine drB -- III you take CRIXIVAN with VIDEO" take them at least one hour anext MYCOBUTINº (rifabutin) - If you take CRONWN with MYCOBUTIN®, your doctor may adjust the dose of MYCOBUTIN.

### NZORAL\* (ketoconazole) --- if you take CRXVAN with NZORAL\*, your doctor may adjust the dose of CROWN

### Talk to your doctor about any medications you are taking. What are the possible side effects of CRIXIVAN?

Like all prescription drugs. CRXVVAN can cause side effects. The following is not a complete list of side efforts recorded with CRXXAN when taken either aince or with other arti-HV doors. Do not salv on this some enecus repursou was crissional when Laxen enter alone of was other anti-riss drugs, boind, rely on this page alone for information about side effects. Your doctor can discuss with you a more complete list of side effects.

Some patients treated with CRIXWAN in clinical studies developed kidney stones; this occurred in about 4% of patients. Drinking at least 6 glasses of liquid each day may help reduce the chances of forming a kidney stone. Call your doctor or other health case provider all you develop kidney. ney pains (middle to lower stomach or back pain) or blood in the urine. increases in bilirubin fone laboratory test of liver functions have been reported in approximately 10% of patients. Usually, this finding has not been associated with liver problems. However, on rare occasions, a

person may develop vellowing of the skin anti/or eves in clinical studies, side effects occurring in 2% or more of nativets included abdominal bain fatigue or weakness, flank pain, feeling unwell, nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, acid requiritation, loss of appetite, dry mouth, back pain, headache, trouble sleeping, duziness, taste changes, rash, upper respiratory infection, dry skin, and sore throat.

Other side effects occurring in 0.5%-2% of patients in clinical studies included: sleepiness, fever, indigestion, excessive gas, muscle pain, ley pain, acusely decression, decreased thin sensation, itching, and paint if

Side effects occurring rarely, in less than 0.5% of patients in clinical studies, and also considered serious, included nell bladder inflammation, liver cirrhosis, pneumonia, and swollen kidneys due to blocked urine flow.

Other side effects reported since CRXWAN has been marketed include: liver problems including fiver failure: kidney stones. mes with kidney failure; rapid breakdown of red blood cells, abdominal swelling; and change in skin color. in come nationts with homospilis increased blooding has been reported

Tell your doctor promptly about these or any other unusual symptoms. If the condition persists or worsens, seek medical after How should I store CRIXIVAN capsules?

### . Keep CRDIVAN capsules in the bottle they came in and at room temperature (59°F-86°F Keep CROWAN capsules dry by leaving the small desiccant

"pillow" in the bottle. Keep the bottle closed.

This medication is prescribed for a paracular coloruse. Do not use if for any other condition or pine it to suppose, Keep CRXXVMA and all revolcines out of the reach of chill if you suspect that more than the prescribed does of this medicine has been taken, contact your iscal palson cont.

This provides a summary of information about CROWAN. If you have any questions or concerns about either CROWAN or HM, talk to your doctor

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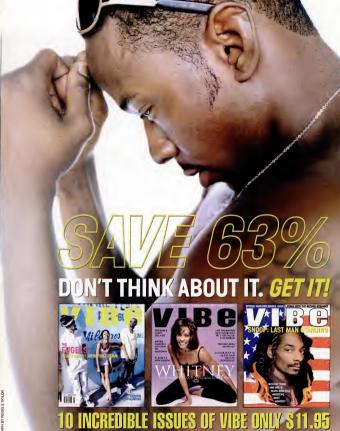


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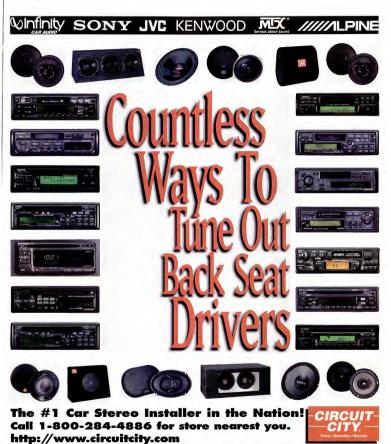


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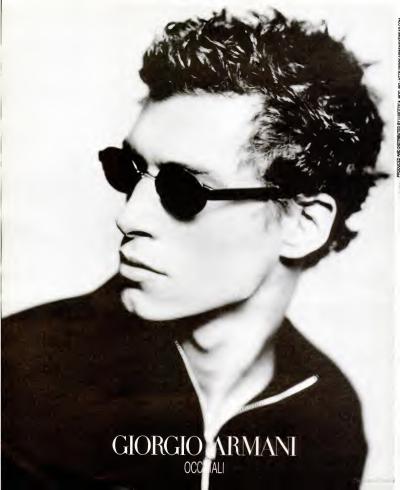
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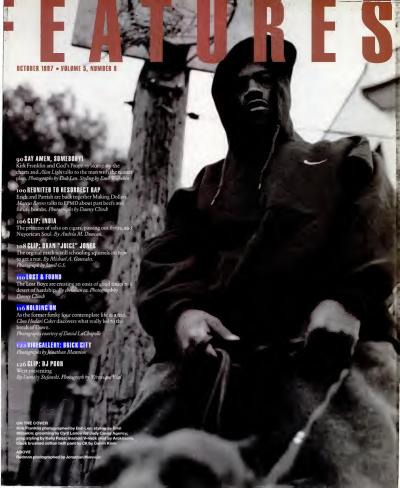




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### FASHION

### 128 VIBEFASHION: CLASS ACTS

Prep school uniforms inspire American designers (again). Photographs by Christopher Kolk, Styling by Emil Wilbekin

### 134 VIBESTYLE: CHILD'S PLAY

Sportswear designers salute military style. Photographs by Marcelo Krasilcic. Styling by Emil Wilbekin.

### 140 THE STYLIST

DESIGNER PROFILE: HELMUT LANG. THE SCOOP: Celebrity fashion lines. Boot style

### REPARTMENTS

40 CONTRIBUTORS

47 MAIL

# VIBB VIBE's World Wide Web site

### 53 START

Reality Bites. By Gabriel Alvarez

•Plus: Eddie Bauer in court. It's Hammertime again. Kool Keith's disappearing act. Disney drops Insane Clown Posse. Gianni Versace: 1946-1997. Dru Hill step off. \*56 SOUND CHECK: Angie Martinez.

### By Bobbito Garcia

\*58 YO, YO YO

\*60 IN THE STUDIO: Rakim. By Michael A. Gonzales ·64 IN THE MIX

\*70 TUPH STREET: Today, the Country. By Bonz Malone \*72 DOMEPIECE: Grandmaster Caz. By Cristina Verán

77 POWER
FIREWATER: Crazy Horse's descendants fight to keep his name off malt liquor bottles. By Dalton Jones \*78 HAIL TO THE CHIEF: Q&A with Wilma Mankiller, former chief of the Cherokee nation. By Rebecca Walker

### 86 NEXT

BILLY PORTER: At the corner of Broadway and Soul. COOLBONE: Booming brass hop. DAVID RYAN HARRIS: Music alchemist.

### 147 VIBEARTS

· FILM: Women in film. By Craigh Barboza SPOTLIGHT: Mekhi Phifer, DR. SNAKESKIN'S VIDEO REVIEWS: I'm Bout It. REVIEWS: Gravesend, The Edge, Fire, Bandwagon, \*152 TV: Fall lineup: Father Figures, Movie of the Month: Clover. \*154 WORD: E. Lynn Harris. Roundup: The Redneck Manifesto. Heart & Soul. color full pain.

\*156 TECH: Affordable computers. Comedy online, Virtual world. The Digital Underground.

### 159 REVOLUTIONS

Puff Daddy & the Family. By Michael A. Gonzales. \*Plus: Earth, Wind & Fire. Scott Walker. Brigette McWilliams. Vanessa Williams, The Alkaholiks, Luniz, Usher, Immature, SWV. II Tru. Lee "Scratch" Perry. Bob Marley. Cuba: I Am Time. No I.D. Seagram, Royal Flush, Laylaw, \*166 BOOM SHOTS: In defense of UB40. By Rob Kenner

\*169 NOTES FROM THE UNDERGROUND. By the Blackspot \*176 VIBE-RATERS \*178 20 QUESTIONS

### 184 PROPS Kraftwerk.

By Chairman Mao

ABOVE: Photograph by Marcelo Krasilcic; styling by Emit Wilbekin; orange nylon backpack vast by Ecko Unlimited, gray tank T-shirt by Calvin Klein Underwear, brown cotton drawstring cargo pant by DKNY, watch by Movado. See the Details

morgan freeman ashley judd A detective is searching for a deadly collector. His only hope is the woman who got away. kiss the girls PARAMONI PROBES HUSKUS IN RESOLUTIO NOTE RESERVENTED LANGUN I DANG BROWN/JE WIZAM PRODUCTON MORSAN FREIAM VISS THE GIRLS ASHEY JUDIO CHRY FLIWES

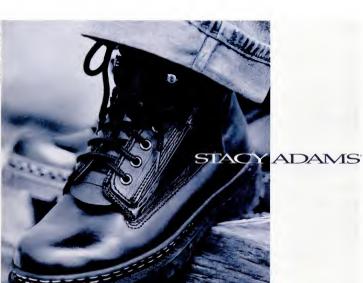
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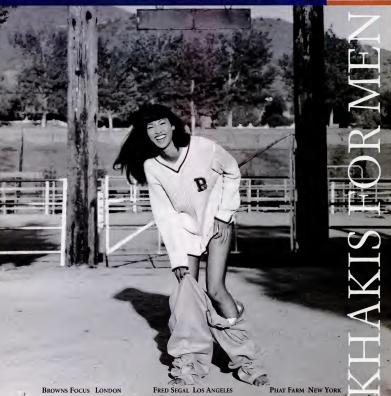


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### Contributors

Harry Allen, Chairman Mao, Cheo Hodari Coker, Bobbito Garcia, Elysa Gardner, Nelson George, dream hampton, James Hunter, Darius James, Laura Jamison, Lisa Jones, Ipeleng Koositsile, Robert Morales, Elena Oumano, Cristina Verán, Harry Weinger, Dontay Wilder, Joe Wood

### Photographers

Ruven Afanador, Kwaku Alston, Butch Belair, Barron Claiborne, Geoffroy de Boismenu, Exum, Larry Fink, Guzman, Daniel Hastings, Eric Johnson, Jayson Keeling, Phil Knott, Dah Len, Dana Lixenberg, Tiziano Magni, Jonathan Mannion, Robert Paul Maxwell, Melodie McDaniel, Reisig & Taylor, Jeff Riedel, Nina Schultz, Karina Taira, Mpozi Mshale Tolbert, Darryl Turner, Andrew Williams, Everard Williams Jr., Dan Winters, Christian Witkin

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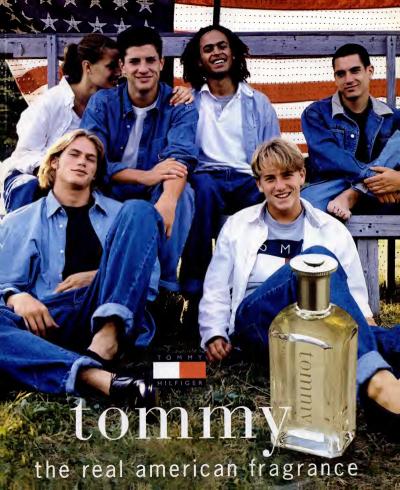
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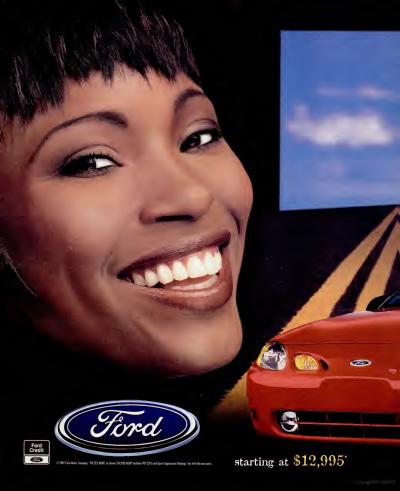
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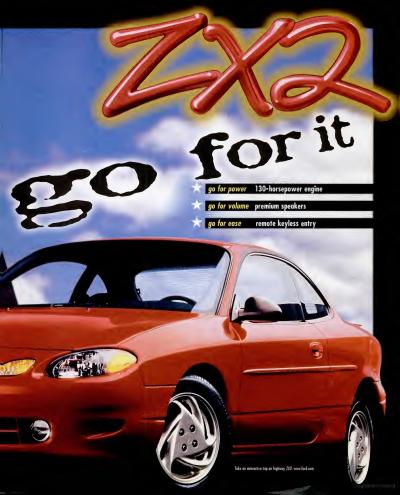


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### CONTRIBUTORS

Patrolling the streets of Newark, New Jersey with Redman, Artifacts, and the Outsiders to shoot the photo essay "Brick City" (page 122), Jonathan Mannion captured the good, the bad, and the beautiful. "I've always been interested in seeing where people come from; it helps me to understand them better. That's why I wanted it to be like a documentary," says Mannion. Raised in Ohio by two artists, Mannion has photographed ads for PNB and worked with Richard Avedon

Marcus Reeves got a glimpse of the past and the future when he visited the set of an EPMD video for "Reunited to Resurrect Rap" (page 100). "Seeing Erick and Parrish together again, rhyming, you forget they ever broke up. A lot of people are skentical about their reunion, but it's genuine," says Reeves. The 28-year-old Newark. New Jersey native has written for The Village Voice and the Amsterdam Nems

VIBE Editor-at-Large



but praise for Kirk Franklin after meeting the singer in Texas for "Sav Amen, Somebody!" (page 90). "He has all the trappings of a pop star-the clothes, the house-yet he's sincere and isn't just trying to cross over," says Light, 31. "It's no coincidence his music is popular, especially after Biggie's and Tupac's deaths. People are looking for answers," states Light. Born in Ohio, Light is VIBE's former Editor-in-Chief. He also edited the recently released illustrated biography Tupac Shakur (Crown Publishing).



"Warm, charismatic, and giving-that's what Kirk is," says photographer Dah Len about this month's cover subject. "Kirk extended his arm and gave me a hug. It wasn't difficult to illustrate his personality and performance on paper." The Taiwan-born Len now resides in New York, He photographed TLC for VIBE's November 1994 cover and now shoots ads for Emporio Armani, Izod, and GUESS? He also has done covers for Mademoiselle and Soin.

Emil Wilbekin, VIBE's new fashion director, reflects on the influential life of Gianni Versace (page 60). Wilbekin, an original VIBE staffer, styled Mary J. Blige for our April cover. Emil dedicates his first issue as director to his father, Harvey E. Wilbekin, 1927-1997....Andréa M. Duncan ran away with India (Clip, page 106). Duncan also contributes to the Next, Start, and Revolutions sections and has written for S.F. Weekly, TimeOut New York, and ego trip....Gabriel Alvarez's biting opinion is evident in "Reality Bites" (page 53). Alvarez profiled the Boot Camp Clik for our August Issue. He is the managing editor of ego trip....It was smooth sailin' for Margeaux Watson when she and Billy Porter floated down the Hudson River while discussing his music (Next, page 86). Watson rules VIBE's In the Mix section....Véronique Vial photographed DJ Pooh (Clip, page 126). She recently completed a photography book called Men Before 10 AM (Beyond Words Publishing, Inc.)....Christopher Kolk shot the fashion spread, "Class Acts" (page 128). He also does work for Entertainment Weekly and Australian Vogue....Marcelo Krasilicic photographed the Style piece, "Child's Play" (page 134). His work has appeared in The Face and Harper's Bazaar...Rebecca Walker spoke with Wilma Mankiller, former chief of the Cherokee nation, for the Power section (page 78). Walker is the editor of To Be Real: Telling the Truth and Changing the Face of Feminism (Anchor/-Doubleday)....Writer-at-Large Michael A. Gonzales was just a squirrel tryin to get a nut when he chatted with Oran "Juice" Jones (Clip. page 108). Gonzales also reviews Puff Daddy's No Way Out (page 159).





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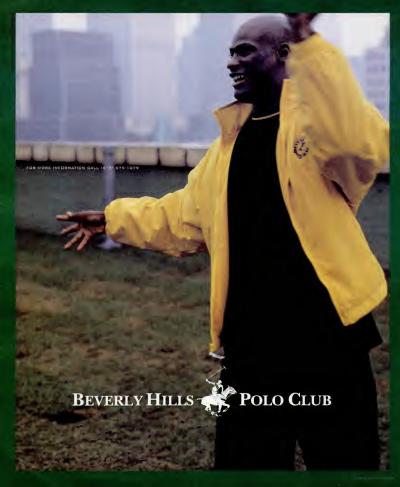
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### OLING EM SOFTLY

I never had my eyes glued to the pages of any magazine like I did pages 82-87 of your August issue ["Soul Sister Number One," by Greg Tate]. Erykah Badu exemplifies what a real sista is all about. Her knowledge of life goes way beyond her superficial counterparts' making it on how phat their asses look in a short skirt. It takes guts to do it an naturel like she does, So, Erykah, I beg you to please keep doing what you do because you are the true essence of the black woman. Hi Priest

Wilmington, DE

I loved the cover story on Erykah Badu. It was sensational. Greg Tate asked everything about her that I wanted to know, and Barron Claiborne deserves much props for his photos because he captured both her essence and her beauty. Now she really has a vibe of her own.

> Darren Terrel Indianapolis, IN

I greatly appreciated your indepth interview with Erykah Badu. It was very informative and gave me a clearer understanding of this truly intellectual black woman. Her views on the Five Percent Nation, of which I am a member, are debateable but well respected. Peace and blessings, Queen.

Shamell Allah Camp Pharsalia Correctional Facility Plymouth, NY

The Erykah Badu cover really caught my eye. She is something new to music that we need because there are already enough sisters revealing themselves and doing any and everything to sell albums. Erykah Badu is a sister who has her own style and doesn't follow any trends. God willing. she will go far in this business. Billy W. Whitaker, a.k.a. Faria Abdullah Hassan Livingston, TX

I appreciate the fact that Erykah Badu didn't let her label dictate the type of individual she would be in this industry. Every time I read an article on her I learn something new. She is here to eleto her spirituality and her reasoning for being as cool as she is. At only 25 years old, she is definitely a role model for the younger generation. Her advice and overall outlook on life is impressive and unique. I think we all need a little Baduizm!

Ebony Worrell Newark, DE

I was very impressed with the Erykah Badu interview. To me. the world is in need of more

positive things to be said about

people in the music industry. I

look at Erykah as a stepping

stone. Her messages are so

clear, and everything said by

her is natural and real. Thank

you for the informative inter-

view. Keep up the good work!

Shunta' Q. King

Mobile, AL

Erykah Badu has really changed my life through her music. It touches the soul; it's reality. We need more righteous people to help us and guide us through their music. I would like to praise Erykah Badu for being her natural black beautiful self with no preservatives added. One love. Be strong, sister.

Paula Rena Wilson, NC

Respect to VIBE magazine for being the first to give us an indepth interview with Erykah Radu She is one of the few truly talented sisters in R&B today. The only thing that upset me about the issue was how astonishingly short the Boot Camp Clik article was ["Roll Call," by Gabriel Alvarezl.

Peter Allen Mt. Vernon, NY

There is nothing exceptional about Erykah Badu. She is simply a righteous, educated lady with a talent as effortless and mature as her demeanor. She is merely exceptional within her culture-America's. Andre Verdara Los Angeles, CA

THE ILL TA-TAS

Waz-up! That's what I said when I saw the buck-hall-

naked pictures of Toni Braxton ["Toni's Secret," by Michael Gonzales, June/July]. I was flippin' when I got the issue. It looked like a porno magazine with her half naked on the cover. Since she got that surgery, she thinks her body is so bangin' that she gotta show the whole world. She can blow, but she need to keep the clothes on the body. I don't think she should have put herself out there like that. She needs to keep her body on the DL

Takiyah Roach Nen Brunsmick NI

### "She's something new to music...there are enough sisters revealing themselves and doing any and everything to sell albums."

vate our people to a higher mental, spiritual, and physical level. That's what it's all about-elevation, passing down knowledge, and helping one another.

Keshia Iones Rochester, NY

Erykah Badu is a sister who reflects strength and selfrespect through her music and attire. She has not succumbed to today's exploitative fashion trends by baring her body to the world in order to sell her music. Her talent, knowledge, and natural beauty sell her

> Tulani Nailah San Leandro, CA

I give Erykah Badu nothing but pure respect. Her sound is not just musical; it's magical. She upholds an image for all African-American sistas, young and old. She demonstrates that everything we represent as a race does not have to be wild. but can be smooth and true to the soul.

Elrica Kay Columbus, IN

Before reading your article on Erykah Badu, I always thought she was weird and fake, but your article enlightened me as



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Vois 1-3 as compiled by Kurtis w tracing hip-hop history m James Brown to Public







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Help me understand why you would put a picture like that of Toni Braxton on the cover. Have you turned porno? Come on, tell the truth. It's not even a good picture of her. What's up with her hair? As for Toni Braxton the songstress, just one word: Why?

TI Maxx Brooklyn, NY

Your June/July issue featured one of the most talented and beautiful women in the music industry: the gorgeous Toni Braxton. Now, what I don't understand is why she had to be practically naked. Don't get me wrong, I loved the pictures 'cuz there's nothing more beautiful than a naked woman-plus, I'm in the penitentiary for life-but she didn't have to go out like that. Toni will always have a fan in me, even if I don't understand why she does certain things.

I think Toni Braxton is getting out of hand. I still think she's pretty, but she has totally lost her class and elegance. She obviously thinks the way she's dressing now is sexy; but it isn't. There is nothing sexy about showing her newfound chest to VIBE readersbecause not everyone wants to see it. Shaquanna S. Williams Matawan, NJ

I did not realize that your magazine had become pomographic. When I saw the issue with Ms. Braxton on the cover with no clothes on I was appalled. I will no longer subscribe to your magazine, because I feel that your magazine exhibited poor taste in putting Ms. Braxton on the cover half naked. I realize that my subscription is but a mere drop in the bucket: but for the sake of me and my children, I will no longer be a subscriber.

Carol Hayes Bronx, NY

WEGOTS TO CHILL The article on Africa's connection to hip hop ["Africa's Hip Hop Generation: Global Pop Culture." by Farai Chideya, August] offered a much needed dialogue concerning black America's connection to our African brothers and sisters. My partying and socializing in various nightclubs in Ghana showed me how influential American pop culture is over there. We black Americans really need to look at ourselves, because we are role models to the world, regardless of whether or not we want to be. Black American artists need to be

particularly cautious about the images and messages they transmit to audiences in the U.S. and overseas.

Ernestine E. Muhammad Chicago, 1L

### NO HALF-STEPPIN'

I feel that Ben Chavis's conversion to the Nation of Islam is a slan in the face to both Muslims and Christians. You cannot believe in the Bible and Iesus and also be a true Muslim. We do not need any half-steppers!

Malcolm Scott Arlington, VA

### TRANSATI ANTIC ACTIVISM

In regard to the article that appeared in the August issue ["O&A: Afro Activist: With TransAfrica's Randall Robinson," by Jennifer Gonnerman], VIBE does an absolutely wonderful iob of national and international journalism. This particular organization definitely deserves the special attention you gave it.

Jerry Meade Malone, NY

### BACKTALK

I'm responding to the piece on the Backstreet Boys [Revolutions, by Nikkei Duncan, Augustl. The things it said really upset me. I'll admit that I used to feel the same way until I had the pleasure of meeting them and working alongside them at a recent Canadian awards show. They are five of the most sincere, down-to-earth guys you could ever meet. It's not just part of an "apple pie" image, as you said, that keeps them on top. They can sing, dance, and put on a show better than a lot of groups out there today. Their vocal abilities can be compared with the likes of Boyz II Men. They are nothing like the New Kids!

Tricia Hosein

Scarborough, Ontario, Canada

### CORRECTIONS:

. The August Props photo of Chic is from the Michael Ochs Archives. · Marc Baptiste shot the O'Javs photo spread on pages 180-181 in the September

· Photographer Tiziano Magni's name was misspelled in the credit for the September fashion story, "Uptown."

MOSCHINO BOUTIQUE 803 Madison Avenue New York SAKS FIFTH AVENUE BLOOMINGDALE'S by MOSCHINO. Chenjand



### Start

### Reality Bites

hat's beef? Beef is when you gnash a chunk if heavyweight champ Evander Holyfield's ear as if I were a saily piece of beef jerky, as Mike Tyson did during their controversial title bout in Las Vegas test June. But what the world seems to be saying about the Brownsville. Brookly bomber—who was fined St million and has had his license to box revoked for at least one ic, that he ready has beef with hisself.

that he really has beet with himself.

Young mine 1989 that 175 year has had will be the second of t

True, munching Holyfield's ears wasn't cool but there's no excuse for the outpouring of thinly veiled racist comments that came from Mike's way, (He's been called an "animal" with "camibalistic" tendencies by various journalists nationwide.) Tyso did what most dissperate, mentally balanced humans do when stuck in a tight, violent situs He bused the fuck out.

Don't front: We've all walked the tightrox of insanity, Sometimes, that little internal voice windows; namely, sometimes, that little internal voice windows; nor do lift other times, we hear. "Sometimes will mother fueve." In Typon's case, he has live revolvers, limitless amme, lichy trigger finance, analous testh, and a reported a chemical real-stane. Mike Typon, a multimillion-dollar articulation and the same of the same



Take It Off Eddie Bauer faces hefty lawsuit

When Alonzo Jackson went shopping at an Eddie Bauer store in suburban Washington, D.C., he had no idea he'd be leaving without the shirt he was wearing. But he did, after two white security guards accused him of stealing it. Jackson, who is black, protested that he bought the garment at the same store the day before. But they told him to take it off and to

go get the receipt if he wanted it back. Jackson, now 18, returned with the receipt and got his shirt that October 1995 day, Now he has something else for Eddie Bauer: a multimillion-dollar lawsuit scheduled for trial in U.S. district court in Greenbelt, Maryland in late Sentember

This happens to black people all the time," says Donald Temple, one of the Washington, D.C. attorneys representing Jackson. "When stores make their black customers produce receipts for previously purchased clothing, subject to possible arrest, or, worse, strip them of their clothing because they don't have these receipts, such actions are outrageous and extremely racist." Temple believes there will be little problem convincing a jury that Jackson was a victim of false imprisonment and defamation, among other claims.

An Eddie Bauer spokeswoman declined to comment about the suit, which is now in litigation. For 77 years, the Seattle-based company has made its name and fortune by peddling

preppy sportswear and accessories. Rasheed Plummer and Marco Cunningham are named with Jackson as plaintiffs. They also are seeking punitive damages in the suit. Security guards forced them to stand in a corner of the temporary warehouse store while a crowd watched their friend Alonzo remove his shirt, the suit states.

In a July press release, a spokesperson for the company-which posted sales of about \$1.5 billion last year-said, "We recognize that we have flourished as a business by respecting our customers.... Eddie Bauer works hard every day to be responsive to those who shop in our stores."

Not true, according to the court deposition of Mary Addi, an Eddie Bauer assistant manager who worked with the franchise's traveling warehouse operation in Salt Lake City and Toronto. Managers routinely asked security guards to follow blacks, she said. In Toronto, Addi saw a precursor of Alonzo Jackson's plight. A manager took an Eddie Bauer jacket from an Asian boy after he failed to produce a receipt for it, she testified in the deposition. Two hours later, she says, "The boy did return. He did have a receipt, and I gave him his jacket." Mensah Dean

### Touch and Go Can MC Hammer do itagain?

Microphone fiends, consider yourselves warned: MC Hammer is back in business. This past August, the former parachute-

pant-wearing wonder was scheduled to release his first album in two years, Family Affair, on the independent label Oaktown Records Could it be "Hammertime" all over again?

and so is the production," says Vallejo, California-based rapper Mac Mall, who has a guest spot on the new LP. "I tell you, he's going to surprise folks on the street with this album." Hammer also gets by with a little help from his friends the Luniz, the



late 2Pac (who appears on one cut), and-get this-Mr. Taste of Chocolate himself, Big Daddy Kane.

The Hammerman, who signed with Death Row Records in 1996 but never released an album on the label (he refuses to comment on the split), is fiercely self-confident, "I think it's one of the best albums of the last five years," he says of his brand-new, 20-song double LP. "I've watched video shows that say, 'Here's the Top 200 videos of all time,' but they won't put one Hammer video in there ... I am so far up there in my achievements that the only way to deal with me is to pretend I didn't happen."

Laugh all you want, but the truth is the truth: Despite geing panned by critics throughout his career, Hammer is still the best-selling rapper of all time with three multiplatinum LPs to his name. Even 1994's Funky Headhunter (Giant) sold more than one million copies. So, how does Hammer feel about his penpushing detractors?

"Most journalists are underachievers," he says. "The only contribution they make to society is to knock another person." Please, Hammer, don't hurt 'em. Billy Jam

### hullets point-blank news .....

THIS IS NO ORDINARY FUGITIVE



Smooth operator Sade from Helen Folasade Adul may be cutting a jailhouse remix of "Is It a Crime" if she returns to her Jamaica residence. In June, magistrate William Campbell issued a warrant for the arrest of the Nigeria native-who is currently living in London-after a third noshow for a court appearance stemming from dangerousdriving charges, "She has not turned up," said Jamaica police superintendent John Morris. "Sade can come back to the island, but a warrant will be executed."



· CASH GORDON

Gordon Parks Sr., director of such seminal films as Shaft and The Learning Tree, has lent his name to a \$10,000 award honoring emerging black filmmakers. The Independent Feature Project and Viacom, Inc. have established the Gordon Parks Independent Film Awards for excellence in screenwriting and directing. Chosen by a panel of judges this year including Parks, Spike Lee, Julie Dash, and Henry Louis Gates Jr.—the first two winners will be announced on September 17 at the Independent Feature Film Market.



DAYTON'S HUDSON'S MARSHALL FIELD'S

### Octa-gone

### Has Dr. Octagon stopped practicing?

Everybody loves Dr. Octagon, the bizarro alterna-rap unit responsible for last year's critically acclaimed Dr. Octagonecologyst LP (DreamWorks). But recently, there's been some trouble with the



good doctor's practice, causing headphone-wearing patients to wonder whether they'll ever receive another dope hip hop prescription.

The illness started last summer when the group's front man, legendary MC Kool Keith, failed to show up for a Lollapalooza tour rehearsal. Soon after, rumors circulated that D.O.'s chief producer, Dan "Automator" Nakamura, had cained the rioths to dishel to the sound of the control of the co

the group's name behind Keith's back. "Neither myself nor Keith can perform or make a record under the [Octagon] name without the permis-

says Nakamura. "I'm the beats; Keith's the lyrics—that's what Dr.
Octagon is."

Why, then, did DreamWorks try to put Dr. Octagon on tour with Sadat X at the helm and not Keith? "Nobody heard from Keith for weeks at that time," says DreamWorks publicist Dennis Dennehy. "[Label executives] were just thinking, 'Do we have any contingency plans?'"

Needless to say, Keith wasn't happy. "I don't know what genius (thought about) doing shows without me—that's an insult," he says. "People feel that I'm disappearing, but I've been working on my own projects."

So, is there a future for Dr. Octagon? "Keith and the Automator are not seeing eye to eye," says Dennehy. "After talking to Keith yesterday, I don't think there will be any more recorded output from the group. But then, with Keith, you never know." Brett Johnson

ound

### Check Bobbito plays the tracks, Angie Martinez states the facts

What if you were an unsigned MC—one who'd never even cut a demo—and KRS—One asked you to rhyme on a track on his album, alongside Redman. Then, Lil' Kim asks you to guest on her next single, "Not Tonight (Remix)." Sounds crazy, but that's only a small piece of the Angie Marinez story.

Angie is very comfortable and happy being an on-air personality turned rapper for New York's (WQHT) Hot 97 FM. In other words, there wow't be an Angie solo LP. But with the noise she's making, I'm sure we'll see her somewhere big—aside from her radio day tob—sometime soon.

Hall & Oates – "Kiss on My List"

A.M.: That's Hall & Oates's "Kiss on My
List." I liked their music back then, but I
didn't really think they were cool.

B. Money's mustache was foolish; then you
saw his gear, and it was crazy wack.

A.M.: Straight comball.

Eddie Palmieri – "Pa'Huele" A.M.: It's the Puerto Rican Parade. I'm weaning a straw hat and an old man is selling me a flag while I'm eating coco belado. B: This reminds me of being in one of my cousin's houses. and all the elders are

drunk...

Am And there's plastic on the sofs, and it's down bot, and all the windows are open, and you're sticking to the plastic covers. The Marc Anthony's and the India's have got me into Latin music, and now I've gone back and discovered Celia Cruz and Tito Puente. Growing up, I felt like it was my parents' music. But I tell you, I love Celia. She reminds me of my exandmother.

Company Flow — "Blind"
AM: That shit is blazing.
B: Hent them one of my records,
and they looped it for this beat.
A.M.: I like the vibe; it doesn't
have that commercial rap formula. It reminds me of a time
when you had to be cool to be
down with hip hop. You had to
swork to get the music [back in the
dayl—had to stay un late Friday.

nights to tape the radio.

B: Hip hop has grown, but the amount of

"extra effort" people down with hip hop has shrunk. Co Flow are one of the best groups out, period. Only us "extra effort" people know about them.

LNR - "Work It to the Bone"

A.M.: "Work It to the Bone"—I can't believe I know this song; that's the funny shit. I used to love this kind of music, [but] it sounds so comy to me now.

B: House music in the '80s had some joints. You could go to a hip hop jam and hear house and hip hop in the same room, the same night. Nowadays, everything is so regimented.

Treacherous Three – "Feel the Heartbeat"

A.M.: That's some roller-skating shit.

B: This automatically reminds me of [that

movie] Syste Wars-the scene where Rock Steady Crew are on that ferry. Now that you've rhymed over this, how do you feel about [the original]? AM: Nothing's changed, this is the ulti-

mate party joint. It reminds me of block parties, sitting on the fire escape, eating watermelon. I would've played myselfif didn't know this one.



### bullets point-blank news .....

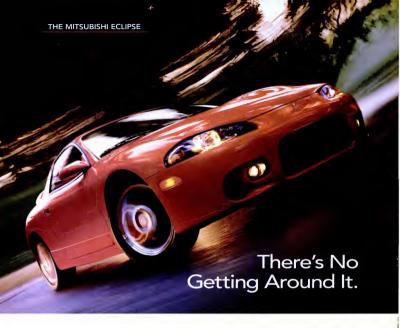
### - TWO GREAT TASTES...

Rock rules everything around them? Wu-Trang Clan, his poly supreme team of killer bees, are ocheadining a tour with alternative public anemies Rage Against the Machine. We're mixing up his hop and rock, "asay Wu-Tang's Beekwen of the partnership. "If gives black and white kids start this August and white kids start this August in Malim, the rour winds up in Invine, Californie, on September 15. "hear [Rage] give of the same energy wedo," says the Chief. "We got thiny days to pet raw."



### LYRICAL LOCKDOWN

Southernhigh coppers, watch yar mouths Despite efforts by the Recording Industry Association of America to convince Governor George Bush Jr. to veto fit, a bill was passed in Texas on June 20 bail included a note or barning state investments in private companies and businesses that produce masks with offered by rick. "Native Bosan and conscientments with the state by rick." Native Bosan and conscientments with the state by rick. "Native Bosan and conscientments with offered by rick." There is a great deal of music out tisse to be stated and the state of the





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### **Boom Time** for Bozos

### Insane Clowns find life after Disney

Disney may have vanked their album, but the Detroit-based, white rap duo known as Insane Clown Posse are getting the last laugh. The group's major-label debut, The Great Milenko, a collage of

raw, misogynist rants about gangbanging and death, might have gone unnoticed if Disney's Hollywood Records hadn't pulled 100,000 copies from music stores just six hours after its June 24 release. Disney's dis sparked interest from 10 labels, including Island Records. According to iCP's managers, Island paid nearly \$1 million

for the album and sent the group on a 35-city tour.



"[Disney] knew they weren't getting Snow White songs when they signed us," says Violent J. the group's 25-yearold front man. According to J, he and his partner Shaggy 2 Dope thought Disney's concerns about their lyrics were limited to two sexually explicit songs that were cut from Milenko at the label's request months before the

album's release. The same day the album was shipped, Disney started feeling heat from the Southern Baptist Convention—the group had already boycotted Disney because of its "gay friendly" employment practices. The next week, Disney execs decided to remove the potentially controversial ICP from its roster.

Disney won't comment, but the Southern Baptists still praise the company's decision. "That kind of obscene and degrading music isn't Disney entertainment," says SBC spokesperson William Merrell.

As for the clowns, they couldn't be happier, Island stepped in and released the complete album, including the two nasty cuts, "ICP can now say and do whatever it wants," says the group's road manager Rich Murrell.

Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck had no comment.

Nicole M. Christian

### YO, YoYo

### Advice from an intelligent black woman

My hushand has five children, but he feels that three aren't his. Yethe's been supporting all of them. In addition to that, we have our own children together. My family feels I shouldn't trip as long as he's taking care of our home. But how can he take care of our home when these children and their mothers are constantly interfering? Unfortunately, we can't afford blood tests right now, but we are working on it. Please help!

The Children Aren't Mine Seattle, WA

Dear Children Aren't Mine.

You should have known what you were getting yourself into before you married him, because he already had five kids. Did you ever ask yourself why he's been taking care of them this whole time if he says they aren't his? Biological or not. he has claimed these children as his own, and it sounds as if it may be too late to turn back. All you can do right now is be a stepmama to all of his kids until he gets that blood test. So, sit tight, mama.

I am a 20-year-old hisexual female who is involved in a relationship with a woman. Recently, she was stationed 2,000 miles away from me; now, she may be enlisted for the next four years. I thought I'd he able to handle a long-distance relationship, but now it's starting to get to me. I love her with all my heart and don't want to cheat on her, but I'm getting tempted. I don't know how to explain this without losing her forever. What should I do?

So Confused Chicago, IL

Dear So Confused, A relationship is based on love, trust, honesty, and communication; so dis-

cuss your feelings. If you feel that you can't handle a long-distance relationship and you love her, then tell her why it's not working out-if that's what you really want. After a frank heart-to-heart conversation, you may want to give your long-distance love affair another shot.



I am a teenage girl with four boyfriends-but all of them are involved in other relationships. I love only one of them, and I finally had the guts to tell him how I feel. He says that he likes me too, but I think he's using me. Can a playa get played?

Playa Pine Hill, AL

Dear Playa,

Playas always get played in the end. Being a teenager and dating two to three different guys at the same time is common; you're just figuring out who you are compatible with in relationships. But if you have "boyfriends" who already have girlfriends, and you are sexually active with them, then you are playing a very dangerous game. Even if you're having safe sex with a latex condom, AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases lurk out there and are unpredictable. Do you know if your other partners practice safe sex with everyone they sleep with? Stop seeing all of them. If these "playas" are seeing other girls, you are not anyone's girlfriend. Make new male friends and enjoy your life. Don't get too serious about anyone until you and he are ready. And don't worryyou'll know when it's all good.

Write to: YO, YO YO, c/o VIBE, 215 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016

### bullets point-blanknews .....

**FUNKY FRESH PRINCE** 

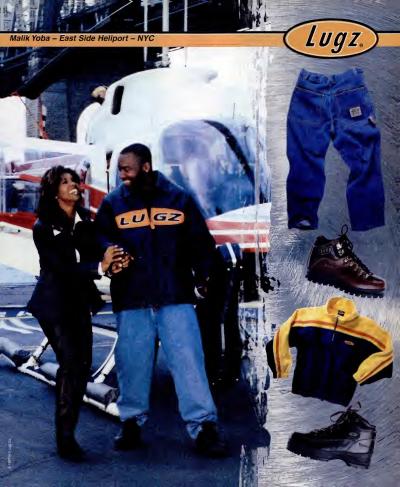


Move over, Puff Daddy, MC Will Smith is back to reclaim his rap throne. The star of this summer's blockbuster hit Men in Black has reunited with DJ Jazzy Jeff for a new album that will be released on Columbia Records in November. And Smith, who has two singles on the MiB soundtrack, has dropped his Fresh Prince moniker. He's also enlisted the help of hip hop hit-making production team the Track Masters. "This album reflects Will's maturity and life experiences," says a Smith spokesperson.



### LIKE A BUTTERFLY

Three-time world heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali, 55, is still hitting the world in its collective head. Nowadays. he's flexin' on hatred, bigotry, and prejudice. The athlete turned activist has founded the World Healing Project. dedicated to promoting tolerance. The Project's inaugural event is a benefit concert-featuring & (who calls Ali "my hero")-slated for October 9 in L.A. "The concert is a vehicle," says Ali, "to propel the healing message on a global scale." Looks like another love TKO.



### Gianni Versace 1946-1997



A gun goes off; a man falls to the ground.

The date was June 25, 1997. Gianni Versace was showing his spring 1998 menswear collection in Florence. The faux blast was part of a Maurice Beiart ballet that, in true Versace style, brought the designer's fab runway show-which also included a surprise cameo by his close friend and muse Naomi Campbell-to a smashing climax.

Less than a month later, Versace, 50, was shot to death (apparently by a roaming serial killer) on the steps of his South Reach Miami home. And fashion-with its links to film, music, and artwill never be the same. The pop costumer/connoisseur will be missed by the likes of Elton John, Sting, Tina Turner,

Sean "Puffy" Combs. Kirk Franklin, Vanessa Williams, Sylvester Stallone, Jon Bon Jovi. and all the other Versace clients who sport his clothes on- and offstage. Phat Farm and Def Jam's Russell Simmons said it all: "Versace revolutionized fashion."

Versace will not only be missed for his sexy, glittery, kaleidoscope clothing but also for his ability to connect fashion and rock 'n' roll, couture and fine art, or, as in his final exhibition, fashion and ballet. He was the master of amalgamation.

And Versace's designs have truly become uniforms of ghetto fabulousness. Stars such as Tupac Shakur (who once modeled in a Versace show), the Notorious B.I.G. (who always rocked his sunglasses). Lil' Kim, and Mary J. Blige have out their flava stamp on Versace. His brand is as worshiped-often, though, from afar-as Moët & Chandon, BMW, and Rolex. And while Gianni Versace is no longer with us, his name will rock on in shout-outs by artists ranging from Little Caesar to Snoop Doggy Dogg, This is perhaps because Versace, like most of the superperformers who admired him, was hip hop: a self-made mogul, a visionary, and, in the purest form, a mix master. Emil Wilbekin

### Studio

### In the lab with



Dressed in a polo shirt and blue jeans, the hip hop savior known as Rakim slowly descends the basement stairs of the Track Factory, a small recording studio in a residential part of Oueens, New York, "I like this studio because it's private," says Ra, who's working on an as-yet-untitled solo comeback that is due in November from Universal, "I like to be alone when I work," he says. "Not worrying about brothers standing in the halls with their ears to the door."

The original microphone fiend sits down and booms a DI Premier-designed cut, "It's Been a Long Time." After some ancient DJ scratches, Ra's regal voice bubbles above the phat bass line, informing the now school of rappers that he still "has more thoughts than a Bible recital."

"On 'Show Me Love'." he says. "I want to show brothers the beauty of black women-beyond a pair of tight pants." And the R does just that, Produced by Nick Wiz, a young Greek cat from New Jersey, this piece flaunts a haunting bass line that merges well with Rakim's righteous verbals.

Perhaps the most commercial tracks are the two produced by Clark Kent. "Light It Up" cleverly samples the Jacksons' post-Motown hit "Heartbreak Hotel," while "Guess Who's Back" is a tight, skills-filled radio ditty.

Judging by these tracks-and Ra's recent Hoodlum soundtrack title song with Mobb Deep and Big Noyd-it's clear that after a five-year layoff, the author of 1987's "Paid in Full" is ready to reignite the rap game with the old flow that's still brand-new, "I feel I have a lot to prove with this project," he says. "It's my job to bring the skills back to the table, to change the course of hip hop." Michael A. Gonzales

### bullets point-blank news · · · ·

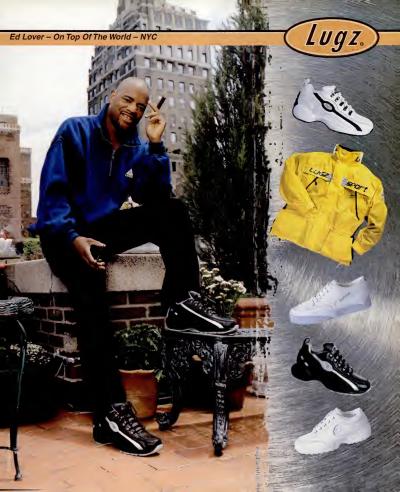
### . THE BIG TEASE

"Dre missed me; I missed him. Now we're just ready to be the dynamic duo, go back to the lab, and make more hits." This recent statement from Snoop Doggy Dogg brought tears of lov to a nation of G's. "We're working on an album called Break Up to Make Up for summertime 1998." But although Snoop has been spending time with the good doctor lately, neither star's record company has any plans for a reunion record. "No one here knows anything about it," said a spokesperson for Dre. Holy disappointment, Batman.



### · AIR ALLAH?

In late June, Nike recalled more than 38,000 pairs of its new Air Bakin, Air Melt, Air Grill, and Air B-Que shoes. Apparently, the kicks were dressed with a flaming logo that resembled the Arabic word for "Allah"-which offended many Muslims. In return for Nike's apology and the recall, the Council on American-Islamic Relations urged Muslims not to boycott Nike. "Our community's principles have to be respected," said CAIR executive director Nihad



### Dirty Pool

### Dru Hill want out of their recording contract

The relationship between platinum-selling R&B sensation Dru Hill and their label, Island Records, looks as if it's dead and stinking.

The quartet, whose gold single "Tell Me" had fools bumpin' and grindin'

across the nation last fall, recently slapped the New York-based record company with a \$55 million civil lawsuit that argues the group should be released from their contract. The suit alleges that Hiriam Hicks president of the label's black music division, beat and verbally threatened both Dru Hill's manager and their lawyerleaving the group "deeply concerned about their lives," An unnamed "body-



guard" is said to have assisted Hicks. The lawsuit was filed this past July in federal

Hicks apparently got into a fight with Dru Hill's managers, Kevin Peck and Keith Ingarm, during a meeting in an Atlanta nightclub. According to the law-suit, "an Island excurive"—identified by New York's Died; Nowa sa Hicks-ordered his bodyguard to "handle" Ingram after Ingram refused an order to "shut the Mory up." The bodyguard then ran after Ingram and "punched him squarely in the face," the suit charges.

The lawait also claims that Hicks himself "physically assaulted" Ingram before striking a blow to the chest of Londell McMillan, the group's lawyer. Hicks is also accused of jumping onto a billiard table and beating Ingram with a pool sitch before he and the bodyguard chased DH members Nisso (Mark Anderws), Nokio (Tamir Kuffin,) Jaze (Larry Anthony Jr.), and Woody (James Green), all 19, and their advisor into the earking of the charge of the char

According to the lawwii, problems between the two camps had been brewing for a while. Hicks supposedly thought Peck and Ingram were novices, and tried to "exert complete dominion and control over the group," the lawwii says. But Peck and Ingram, who have represented Dru Hill since their Baltimore talent show days in 1992, were not having it, sources said. Though Hicks would not comment on the lawsuit, Island Records issued a statement saying that criminal charges brought against Hicks in Atlanta were kicked out of court. Furthermore, the statement said, the mesa-company believes

Dru Hill's lawsuit is "nothing more than a bad-faith attempt to extract money from Island Records."

The bottom line is greed," says Stanley Brown, senior director of A&R at Island Black Music. "You have a man [Hicks] who took four young men from Baltimore, established them in the marketplace, and gave them a lot of success. Now, a lot of people are saying to Dru Hill, 'You're really big. And if you go across the street [to

another label], you could get fifty million dollars."

Du Hill's managers insist that the issue inst't money: "The guys want to be as far away from Island as they can," says Peck, who also says that recently sent a 'termination letter' to Island chiefs informing them that Du Hill would no longer conduct business for the label. "[Du Hill] got into this business to get away from these kind of ganguter ractics."

But court documents show that economics have been an issue for the Dru Hill and Island camps. A month before the Atlanta incident, Dru Hill's managers turned down a Hicks-negotiated deal that would have carned the group a \$1 million advance on royalties and an additional \$55,000 to perform a Bubyface-produced cut for a movie soundtrack. Peck and Ingram argued that Dru Hill should receive a \$2 million advance and \$500,000 in nonrecoupable tour funds.

Hicks released a second statement July 29, in which he said that Island intends to continue its "mission" to take Dru Hill's latest single, "Never Make a Promise" to "the top of the charts." Dru Hill's second single, "In My Bed," went platinum. According to Dru Hill's managment team, though, Island's mission is impossible.

"In our minds," says a resolute Peck, "Dru Hill's relationship with Island is done. Terminated."

Denene Millner

### Etc. Etc. Etc.

Faux. Joe. In a recent New York Times and lock and with the first and wither to Sean \*Puthy\* Combs, the nespected journal committed a big pic fishery to be too. The capitor in the nebew a photon of Putf and heavy supply and Fat Lore read. "Mc Combs with the aping, fishery to Dear Fat Lore read." Mc Combs with the part in the lower a photon of Putf and heavy supply in appear leave; and Fat Boy." That is a pretty dangering and series and





### Me, Myself, and I

1. Biz Markie hyped the crowd at the Tibetan Freedom Concert with his impersonation of rock and soul quitar legend Jimi Hendrix. (2.) Seldom-seen reggae luminary Lee "Scratch" Perry also made a special appearance at the concert, which was held on N.Y.C.'s Randalls Island. 3, Hip hop hoorayl A new Common album will soon be on the wayl 4. Accepting honors on behalf of Bob Marley and the Wailers at the ASCAP 10th Anniversary Rhythm & Soul Music Awards was the royal mother of reggae, Rita Marley, 5. Is Q-Tip wearing sunglasses or protective eve googles at N.Y.C.'s Pier 59 Studios? Regardless, the camera's flash couldn't have been so bright as to warrant this facial expression. (6.) Singer Joan Osborne also attended the Pier 59 party, but she doesn't look too happy. 7, Wyclef's not wearing any underwear and his practically flashing the crowd at N.Y.C.'s Jones Beach were a bit extra. Doesn't he know that anything can happen? a. Did Maxwell purposely wear a platinum-colored suit to his N.Y.C. platinum party? So what if he did-homeboy's rockin' it. 9. Can you believe Kool Keith, a.k.a. Dr. Octagon, actually made the photographer wait while he posed for this picture? 10 Gossip gueen Wendy Williams, of New York's (WQHT) Hot 97, set aside other folks' business long enough to celebrate the gold LP Funkmaster Flex Presents the Mix Tane Volume 2; 60 Minutes of Funk at Club NV in N.Y.C. 11, is the Reverend Run of Run-D.M.C. preaching, rhyming, or having a conniption before the crowd at N.Y.C. nightclub Tramps? 12. Look closely, He's in Las Vegas, With the (at least) year-long suspension of Mike Tyson's boxing license, it'll be a while before you see him boxing-or biting-in Nevada again. Margeaux Watson















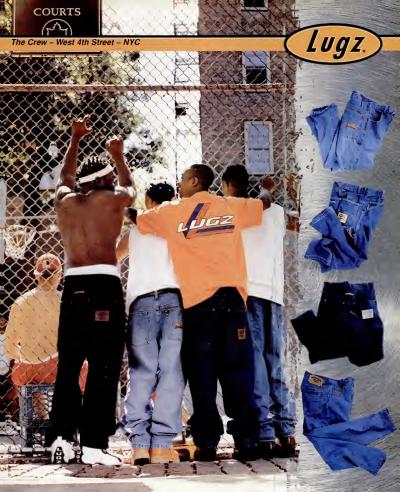












# Who Ya Wit'?

1. Erick Sermon and Parrish Smith are back together as the beloved rap duo EPMD on the set of the "Never Seen Before" video shoot. Apparently, only their fans are smiling about the reunion, 2, Former Black Panther Geronimo Pratt celebrated his release from prison at Georgia's Restaurant in West Hollywood with his sister, Jenny, Kathleen Cleaver, and a host of civil rights champions. 3. At the Men in Black L.A. premiere, Hollywood power couple Will Smith and Jada Pinkett pose with Smith's son, Trev. for a charming portrait in black. 4. DJ Sticky and MC/producer Tricky at a birthday party for Roc-a-Fella CFO Damon Dash in N.Y.C. 5. A beyy of celebrities flocked to Las Vegas to witness the tragic spectacle that was the Holyfield-Tyson fight, including rapper Kam and John Singleton. (6.) Funnyman Michael Colyar and sexy man Leon were also in attendance at the MGM Grand, (7.) It's no surprise that Madonna and Maverick Recording Co. bigwig Guy Oseary were at the fight. Watching two muscular men duke it out might just be the Material Mom's kind of fun. 8. This photo of Chris Rock and his wife. Malaak, was obviously taken before the fight. 9. Giorgio Armani and Laurence Fishburne rubbed shoulders while wining and dining at Armani's spring/summer '98 men's show in Milan. Looking good, fellas. 10. Buckshot, the B.D. Eye MC, appears a tad surprised as Boot Camp Clik comrade Starang Wondah goes for a piggyback ride at N.Y.C.'s famed Lyricist Lounge, 11. Aaliyah, George Clooney, and Kidada Jones put in some quality hang time in L.A. In this company, who needs Robin or Batgirl? 12. Fly buddies Afrika Baby Bam and Mike G of the Jungle Brothers get down and funky at N.Y.C.'s Tramps. M.W.













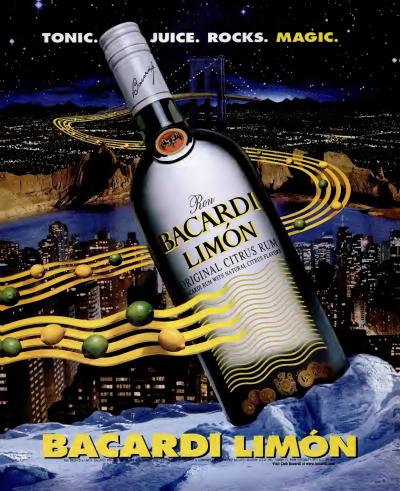














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-An inscription on the Manhattan State Supreme Courts Building

not a job. Those of us who are fortunate enough to be able to put a roof overour heads and a loaf on the table may have jobs that are too small for our spirit. And sometimes it's hard enough to believe in that place in the sum—how

Listen up! Here's the plan: To enjoy the spoils of the Earth, we must he spoils of the Earth, earth strates squeeze the juice from the fruits of our labor. Power has been captured by the free there's a very small top and a very in big bottom. Wou don't set on our mild big bottom. You don't set on our liste between. That's why we called this emergency meeting of the lustice League Federation. The League is a mulichmin, cunical manfat that influenced outdooks and outcomes within various industries formore than a decade. Our holdings are extensive and diverse, lust put it this way, we make good opcole better.

The League has always been a small to yet effective group, but now it's incompt. but now it's more to "open up the books," recruit young visionaries to our ranks, and establish a middle management among the youth of this country. Time's wasting and there's work to be done. We gotta read und touch influential businessmen, lawyers, investment bankers, judges, and journalists. Back in the old days, and to provide the properties of the properti

Even as we speak, I got people on their way to see certain key figures. No beef, just necessary introductions. The reason being, I got one hell of a vision that's starting right back at me. Call it a new beginning, a chance to put all the mistakes behind us, to make the right choice between guns and God. Everybody got ideas, but who has enough muscle to carry them out?

Remember the compassionate men who helped us get a piece of the cake when we were young? It's our turn now. The challenge is to help our associates find work that's "big enough for their spirit" and to expand the franchise at the same time. True, we got things locked in

this town, but what about the rest of the country? While I'm out on tour, I need a crew operating in some of our roughest cities to help even the odds. We've got to expand—overstand?

It's time to rethink the League tradition of inducting strictly tough guys from Tuph Street. Find me some "Coodificance" skilled in the art of accounting. Somebody from what trapsyers call H&R Block (Hit & Run to you and me) would be suitable. Let's change the definition of the United States to the United Weights of America. Whether operating within the media, the garment industry, obarmamedia, the garment industry, obarmavision they'll receive. Besides establishing a rapport with mentors from all walks of life, their duties will center around information gathering. Anything and everything that might create opportunities for the youth, let's have to their and they will be obligated to provide this information on a monthly basis, othey must have a serious commitment to those who depend on them. Please take

Acquiring property is the highest American dream. However, we don't have to own a chunk of swampland to

this opportunity seriously!

satisfaction is an indulgence we can no longer afford. The key to transcending the limits of ego—to making possible tomorrow what was impossible yester-day—lies in the unseen worlds of the human mind and heart.

Before I'm eligible for the "Thirty and out" fratenity, I will build some thing that's held exclusively for those who fail to find in their work a secure place in the human community! All in agreement with this action, please raise your hands and your voices with me and say I! Since the majority is in favor of the possible, let us then be just and fear



ceuticals, or labor unions, everything we do (that's public) must be legal.

Certain universal rules come into play here: loyally, ediciaciano, cooperation, and honesty. We want young men who are well organized, good writers, better fighten. We need sisters who can reak security codes like eggshells and get to the bottom line like hollow point shells. The great ones manifest their gifts by looking inside themselves to scrutiate their blass and preducke. But with a size their blass and preducke. But we need not apply. I need National Interno. The control of the size o

You know the way it's supposed to go, the same a when I picked you: Candidates gotta be looked at, schooled, groomed, then they gotta make their boms. After that they can be vouched for, proposed, and finally "made" into a card-carrying member of the [J.F. First of all, they will serve as our associates while beingested. When the time comes, we'll have a nother meeting in which we will be formally initiate them into "our thing."

ormally initiate them into "our thing." The higher they climb the less superbe information brokers in the Realness Estate market. By handing down responsibility to others, we become dream

sponsibility to others, we become dream landscapers, tilling the tough soil and dropping fertilized seeds that are sure to be fruitful and multiply. This has been my objective since I was a dumb nigga runnin' the streets. What I

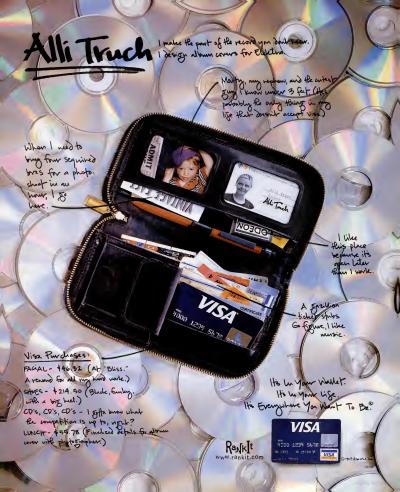
adumb nigga rumini the stretes. What idin't know was that achieving goals through violence is not a complete victory. The skilled warrior/leader doesn't bring a knife to a gunfight, he orshe relies on a much more powerful ally to defeat the forces of death. The human mind is the most powerful weapon ever devised. Accurate knowledge is its ammunition. Use it to leady out emotions, and it will lead you to greatness. The real tough goy in the ones mosting before has better the control of the control

work anymore. Instead of looking backward, new leaders are looking inward. The Justice League helped me understand that the other side to success deals with "the company we keep." Smug selfnot! So what if the feds are watching us. Without probable cause, there's no stopping us! Battle stations!!

And we know we shall win, as we are confident in the ultimate victory of good over evil.

To be a national intern, write to the Justice League, c/o VIBE, 215 Lexington Avenue. New York, NY 10016





#### Domepiece

People of the world, meet Grandmaster Caz. Back in the early 1970s, when hip hop was but a seed germinating in a Bronx garden, Grandmaster Caz (of the illustrious Cold Crush Brothers, which also featured Easy AD, Almighty KG, JDL, and DJs Charlie Chase and Tony Tone) ruled park jams with his levity-laced street stories. Caz's intricate talk tapestries are alive and well today; hip bop purists from Japan to New Jersey still thrill to his rough and raw cassette-tape battles from yesteryear.

The proof is in the spiked fruit punch. Caz's nusic can be found spinning on better turntables, his spirit in the recently rereleased 1982 cult flick Wild Style. Hip bop has gone through many changes, fought many wars, and lost some of its strongest soldiers; but Grandmaster Caz is still bere, still involved-and without a video or recording contract. Not many MCs can say that.

> started out as a DJ. I was the first to cut records and rhyme-well. Everybody else was just one or the other. My original name was Casanova Fly. "Grandmaster" didn't come in until later. See. grandmaster isn't a name; it's a title. There were only two people called grandmas-ter-Grandmaster Flowers and Grandmaster Flash. One night at a club, I was cuttin' a record back and forth, and my DJ partner then, Disco Wiz, was shouting, "Faster! Faster!"-urging me on. So I kept cuttin' faster and faster, and the crowd was getting all hyped up. They started goin', "Grandmaster! Grandmaster! Grandmaster!" I earned my title.

> I've been an MC ever since there was emceeing, from, like, '75. MCs rock mikes; rappers work at Macy's, wrapping packages. What they call a rapper now is, like, a watered-down version of a true MC. I've written about ten thousand rhymes, though only, like, fifty of them are classics. Here's one of my classics:

Well, I was on the bus, just takin' a ride. I felt a bard pull on my left side.

I took off my shades and turned around. There was a nigga in my pocket going way, way down.

I grabbed him by the collar, said, What's the deal? He said, "I'm Starvin' Marvin and I need a

I said, If you wanna eat, don't cheat or rob. Take your ass Downtown and get you a job. He was a pretty young kid, so I gave him a

Took him to a restaurant and bought him a

The kid was really hungry, and he liked the

place, So I bought him some more and let him dog his

He finished his meal, and I paid the bill. For forty-seven dollars, he doesed his erill. But now he's making a living, very honestly. He's on the street, selling cheeba for me. He used to jostle on the bus, dressed in rags. But now he's styling, selling joints and hags. So if you want the cheeba that's really on, Buy it from the nigga with the broken arm.

would take a love song and put some hard lyrics in it.

Emceeing was at its peak before the record companies came into the picture and started distorting the whole view of what was good and what wasn't. Sure, the Sugarhill Gang came out with "Rapper's Delight," but none of them were even real MCs! As a matter of fact, I wrote damn near everything Big Bank Hank said on that song. And I've never been compensated for it-who knew about lawyers and

I wrote this when I was in high school copyrights and shit back then? CASANOVA FLY at Macy's, wrapping packages

and, at the time, jostling [pick-pocketing] was very popular. The twist of the story was, instead of dogging the kid out. I put him on. But in the end, he got a broken arm. There was a lesson to it.

The artists today don't know the four parts of hip hop culture: emceeing, deciaving, breaking, and the art of graffiti. The "rap thing" is the most marketable right about now. So that's all they exploit. If you've just been following Wu-Tang and Biggie and Tupac, you might be experiencing the essence of rap, but you're not getting the essence of hip hop.

When rappers have Mariah Carey or Mary I. Blige singing on their records. that's not hip hop-that's R&B. You can't compare that to a routine like my crew would do. Cold Crush has always been known for rhyming melodically. We

At first, a lot of [MC's] would sound the same. Somebody would say something, and then you would say it too, but you'd flip it and put your little insignias in it. Then people started adapting from jingles, commercials-shit on TV. And that's when it started becoming an art, and being competitive.

We were approached by Russell Simmons back in the day. He offered us a contract, but he wanted us to change our name from Cold Crush to the Kold Krush Krew, using K's instead of C's, so we would have been the KKK MCs. We wasn't having that, though.

After that, we signed with Tuff City Records. That's when we made "Punk Rock Rap." Around that time-the early, early '80s-the Uptown/Bronx hip hop scene started to merge somewhat with the punk scene in Greenwich Village clubs. We saw Punk Rock Rap as a vehicle to sort of bridge these two scenes even more. It really caught on with the Downtown cats, but the hip hop world was, like, "What the fuck is v'all doin'?"

How good a record is doesn't determine record sales. It's what the industry wants to push, what they want to make happen, who they want to blow up. How many bullshit records have you heard where you say, "That shit is wack!" but then you kept hearing it? And then you kept seeing that person in the magazines? Then you see them in a commercial and guest starring on The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air, and eventually, you're, like, "Oh, that shit is kinda a-ight." But it ain't a-ight; it's still wack. You've just been inundated with the stuff; it's been soaked into your psyche. That's how they sell records.

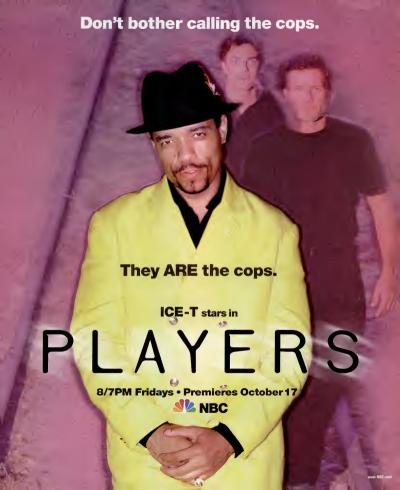
If Puffy called me up right now and said, "Yo, Caz, I want you and the Cold Crush to make a record with me-I'll tell you how to do it and everything," I'd say, Fine! No problem. If you've got a hit formula and you're gonna give it to me, I'll follow it. I got my own formula, but mine ain't makin' no hits.

If I played every record in my crate, I could stand up here and rhyme through every record. Some "rappers" can only rhyme to a particular record, or need a certain beat to write to. Fuck that! Back in the days, when the DI was cuttin', if you wanted some light, you'd better grab the mike and go with it. There's so much more to it than just going up in a recording studio and reading your rhymes.

I've made about fifteen records-with Cold Crush and on my own-but that's not why you should know me. The impact and influence that I've had on this culture has nothing to do with records. Ask Run-D.M.C. what was the first tape they ever bought, and they'll tell you that it was a Cold Crush tape. I've seen the lives I've affected, and I know what I did hasn't been for nothing. All I really wanted to do in this life was to leave a legacy, something to let people know Caz was bere.

As told to Cristina Verán







# LATENIGHT TALK &

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## **Firewater**

A century after Little Bighorn, the modern-day descendants of Crazy Horse are fighting old batties with new adversaries. By Balton Jones

The Lakora Sioux know him as T-sunke Witho.
Others know him simply as Cazay Horse.
Crazy Horse is most famous for leaving the
bone of LL Olonel George Armstrong Custer and
his U.S. Seventh Cavalry out to bleach beside the
Little Bighorn River in 1896. A year later, Crazy
Horse's starving troops were forced to surender, but
his significance to Native Americans runs much
deeper than his role as a military strategis. Apart
from his might we fforts to retain control of South

Dakota's mineral-rich Black Hills, the legendary warrior had a long history of battling to preserve traditional Native American ways of life. For native peoples—particularly those of the Lakota Sioux nation—it's his legacy as a defender of native culture that makes Crazy Hone one of their most revered ancestors.

or their most revered ancestors. Now, this legacy is being challenged on a new front. In 1992 a team of beverage makers joined forces to produce a-ounce botdless of malt liquor bearing the name and supposed likeness of the Native American hero (who had never allowed himself to be photographed). Today, Crazy Horse's descendants are waging

legal warfare to try to stop the supabrew from using his name. Though Crazy Horse's relatives have no intention of abandoning their five-year battle, their adversaries—G. Heileman Brewing Company and Feotlio Valtaggio & Sons, owners of the Homell Brewing Company and makers also of Arizona Iced Teasare large and well funded.

How powerful are these companies? In 1992 Congress passed an amendment, signed by President Congress bath (a man not known for political co-corrections), that havended theu eof Caza y Hone's name recreases, that hamed theu eof Caza y Hone's name repealed after blook between the control lifed suit against the government on First Amendment grounds. "We didn't man what could be done to pervent this malt liquor from being sold," says Robert Gough, the lawyer for form being sold," says Robert Gough, the lawyer for the Crazy Hone state. "Congress couldn't do it. Thorhing else, the family what the right to bupled the dignity of the name."

It's a legal dispute that goes to the very heart of the struggle to maintain Native American culture and self-determination. It's hard to imagine a stereotype more permicious than the drunk Indian—especially since firewater was introduced to this country by white settlers—or a case where corporate power was being wisdled to perpetrate a more blatant stereotype. Fifty-nine-year-old Seth Big Crow (whose grandfather was Crazy Hores's cousin) feles to strongly about the cause that he has broken a traditional code of silence and chosen to speak our publicly. The biggest insult of all," says Mr. Big Crow, "is putting [Crazy Hores] on a liquor bottle. He represented a position against alcohol. He spoke our against it."

While Crazy Horse's estate considers the use of his name a particularly disrespectful form of corporate piracy, the brewmakers call it a free-speech issue. "Crazy Horse died in the 1870s, and there are iterally millions of products with his name on them, ranging from saloons and strip joints to chewing um," sws Lawrence Fox, the lawyer for Ferolito

ACCUMANT ACC

Vultaggio & Sons. "The name is the most frequently used symbol to associate products with the Old West." But for the families of the Cazy Hone cease, that is precisely the point. Constant missuse of their ancestor's name has morivated them to draw a line in the sand. "We're the only ethnic group! I know of that are just readed as public domain," says Big Crow. "Whatever we have, and whatever we represent, they come in and take it as they belase."

Their struggle has been complicated by the fact that the Lakos Siou, like other swerigin native nations, have their own legal system. Determining who gets to decide this dispute has been difficult. For the past five years, the case has bounced back and forth between federal and ribal courts. Gough believes that U.S. authorities are reluctant to set any larger precedents. "There has been a great hetitancy in the mainstream population to see nonludians be accountable before an Indian court." Gough says that thelo courts have no riminal justidiction over non-Natives who commit crimes on reversations. But the ouestion of c'ulti unsidiction reversations. But the ouestion of c'ulti unsidiction has yet to be tested.

Later this year, the Eighth Circuit Courr of Appeals may begin to hear arguments in this length; uidicial battle. In the meantime, activists have organized a boycot as alorbol continuous to devastare the Native American community—in which the rate of colcololism is six times the national average. They say, "We don't sell it on the reservation," says Gough, "but today, half the people identified as thrib—all members live just outside reservations in urban area like Phoenix, Denver, and Chicago." It is precisely these cities that have been flooded with cheap, potent mall islount like Crazy Horste.

Ron Daniels, executive director of the Center for Constitutional Rights in Washington, D.C., and a longtime African-American activity, believes that the common issue of alcohol abuse and liquor marketing should bring blacks and Native Americans togething. He notes that most African-Americans don't even

know that there's a Crazy Hose malt liquor controversy, undercutting support for an effective boycott. Daniels believes that joint blak-Native American gasarost or againzations could have a real impact. But, as he puts it, "Both sides are so incredibly under siege that very often we can't come up for air long enough to see that we're swimming in the same endangered lake."

This "lake" includes shared issues of poverty: unemployment, inadequate health care, environmental pollution, subpar educational systems, and youth violence. But blacks and Native Americans share something else: a common history of resistance

to exploitation by the dominant American society as well as a gene pool. "Probably forty percent of African-Americans are actually Afro-indigenous," says Daniels. "We need to carry that history because indigenous people took us in when others would not take us in; they fought wan rather than submit to the fugirity salve laws."

As one of the organizers of the Million Man March, Daniels invited Big Crow and Gough to address the premarch leadership conference. "What can amillion people do?" Gough told them. "They've got the power of the pocketbook. They can march into those liquor stores and say, "You're ripping off Indian culture to sell malt liquor. This is racist; we don't want this in our communities."



## Hail to the Chief

Wilma Mankiller may have stepped down as chief of the Cherokee nation, but she is still teaching practical ways to change people's lives. By Relecce Walter

If thin the boundaries of the United States are a coultion of independent governments—the 5th Native American nations. Boasting a first hoppulation of 14,000 and 14,000 and 14,000 and 14,000 and 15,000 and 15,

In 1987, Wilma Mankiller (the fierce-sounding name is a Cherokee military title not unlike "captain" or "major") became the first woman elected chief of the Cherokees, Strong-willed, ancestrally connected, and remarkably focused on the empowerment of her people, Mankiller served two consecutive four-year terms (1987-'95), and was responsible for bringing basic services like running water and child care centers to many Cherokee communities. When she wasn't in the trenches building houses or raising money for Head Start programs, she was quietly leading a movement to revitalize tribal courts and government. Both courageous and pragmatic, she has continued to speak out about women's equality and has insisted that the U.S. government uphold their treaties guaranteeing tribal sovereignty. She spoke by telephone from her ancestral home in Adair County, Oklahoma, an area first settled by Cherokees in the 1830s.

What are the most important differences between Native American and more mainstream American cultures?

Within Cherokee and Native American culture, there is a greater sense of interdependence, of tibe, that I don't see in the larger community. There is a strong feeling that we are all in the situation we find ourselves in together. You can get folks out to do something if you talk about the larger good. You appeal to their sense that though it may not help



them, it will help the people down the road.

Cherokee culture puts an emphasis on something called being of good mind. What does this mean?

"Being of good mind" is the concept of trying to focus on the positive attributes of people or situations. In Cherokee traditional prayers, we start out by saying, "First let's remove all negative thoughts from ur mind." The idea is to get yourself in the best mental state possible, because if you are in a really good mental state, then you can deal with whatever is in front of you.

In our culture, wealth—the objects that you own and the amount of money you make—is a measure of personal value. What are the Cherokee ways of affirming percontinuous.

One of the things that has survived in our culture is that the people who are held in the highest esteem are not the people who have accumulated great personal wealth or who have made great pro-



fessional strides but the people who have made a contribution to the community itself somehow. The folks that are the most respected among our people are the folks who have subscribed to the old ways and who have a sense of responsibility for others, a sense of interdependence.

What role does music play in the empowerment of Cherokee people?

Music is the backdrop to so much of my life. When we go to the ceremonial grounds and hear songs that our people have heard since the beginning of time, there is an incredible connection to both our ancestors and to the future. Music serves as a backdrop for who we are.

The most ubiquitous news stories seaturing Native Americans center on casinos and the return of ancestral remains. What stories about Native Americans aren't being covered that you'd like to see?

One of the problems that I see in reporting on Native people is that folks report on leaders or movements, but they don't report on everyday folks. So it is difficult for people to relate to us other than as icons or as folks who belong in a museum. People have to see that native people—aunts and uncles and children and grandforthers and grandfathers and sisters and brothers—have the same hopes and aspirations as everybody else. Until people can relate to folks on a human level, it is going to be difficult to understand the politics.

One of your main goals has been to enable people of the nation to be self-sufficient. What's the most important element of your more toward self-sufficiency?

The most important thing has been to try move us beyond thinking that other poople have solutions for our problems. No matter what I do, the central theme is always to try to move us to a point where we trust our own thinking again and believe in our selves again as a people. That is a major job—to get rural, poor, Cheroke people to look at themselves and say. "We know better than some horshot planner who thinks he knows what we should be doing."

On a practical level, how do you do that?

Sometimes it starts with a small thing-people's being upset because they can't get the WIC [family nutrition] lady to come on a certain day and then their exercising power and control to get her to come on the day they want. After seeing that, maybe they will fix the fence in the community or open a Head Start center. The important thing is for people to see that they can have a hand in creating change.

What can non-Native American voters do to support that ongoing respect for tribal leadership and rights?

They can educate themselves about the true history of this country and look at the role of Native tribal governments in this country. They can continue to support tribal rights and government through their congressmen and senators and other elected leaders. Long before there was a U.S. government, there were tribal governments.

What role do you feel the U.S. government has to play in Native American self-reliance and development?

That is really difficult, because every time the United States government has intervened in tribal policy, they have made a mess of things. In general, the Congress and the courts right now are still maintaining a government-operorement relationship with tribal governments and that is really important. There are constantly folks trying to do away with tribal rights, so that battle continues constantly.

Do you see parallels between Native American struggles and African-American struggles?

A lot of the issues of getting us to trust our own thinking again are very similar. We have been beaten down and, basically, told not to trust our own thinking. We've been told that our languages are archaic, that our culture doesn't easit anymore, that our history is irrelevant. To try to reclaim some of that and understand ourselves and look within our own culture and our own history and believe in our-selves again is really an act of revolution. U







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-



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#### BILLY PORTER

IT'S 1 PM. AND AN ANIMATED AUDIENCE AT LIFE nightcub in Gotham Cityls on its test shouting, applauding, testifying to the vocal phenomenon known as Billy Porter. Wish you were here; jour you aren't, just imagine a man who, as a boy of 11 years, dedicated his life to the arts after witnessing Dramagrid Jennifer Holiday betto L'And IAm Telling You'rn Not Going' on the Tony Awards. Yes, this Life party is just getting started. And so is Porter.

"I was almost a preacher when I was twelve years old," the Broadway performer turned recording artist recalls. Years later, however, the 25-year-old Porter realized that he does have a good-news message, but says, "It won't be spread in the conventional stand-bushed to the standard of the conventional stand-bushed to the standard to

It's this absence of fear—and abundance of talent—that gets Porter heard. In 1990, during his last semester at Carnegie Mellon University, he interned with the cast of Miss Saigor and, shortly after, reached for the stars and won the \$100,000 grand prize in the 1992 Star Search competition. The curtain calls kept coming, and Porter went on to perform on Broadway in Five Guys Named Moe, Grease (with Rosie O'Donnell), and Smokey, Joe's Cafe.

Last year, "Love Is on the Way," his churchy single from the First Wives Club soundtrack, garnered much attention and begat his debut LP, Untilled, on A&M Records. "The hardest thing was making the transition from the theater to the studio," he explains, "—maintaining the excitement that I have live."

Well, make that the second hardest thing, behind leaving his homelown of Pittsburgh. "I fell I should stay there and take care of my mother, but she was [saying], "I you want to help me, you!ll go to New York, live your life, and send me back some money on occasion." "Billy Porter laughs agein. "That's exactly what." I'mdoing.





STEYE JOHNSON, s.s., OIDNT start out trying to invent brass hop. The truth is, Johnson was just a high school trombone player trying to evoid the inevitable geak references.

But then the Louisians native started his own band. "A calective," he says." I started playing in clubs when I was thirteen." Back then, the pubescent crew played marching numbers and RAB tunes all over the Crescent City, distantiagn only while Johnson did a stint in the

army. The group had an
enthusiastic following—and
with a moniker like Coolbone
(Johnson's nickname), how
ne could they me.

because the section of the continue that we change the continue the gospel stand of the gospel stand of the contoction. The little continue continue and the continue continue and section (says, "It's a unique amalgam of his hop and brass-band jazz," Instead of the oft-nequilitie samples, turntables, and DJ,

Coolbone's ferce music includes breath from burst-sometimes from a many as acrea different instruments.

Lister of the cool of

Steve says, "The issues we address have to do with mod orn urban life. Our stuff is about what it is like being a rhaw management by today—

"The way to be a supple of the state of the supple of the

Simultinatives in the street i

shape. "Without Enc's tyrics, this band would not be what is," Johnson says. "He has a one ent approach. Eric's more into hip hop—and I not er oven heard go-go music until Carter brought it down."

Johnson and crew know, though, that it's the horns that make them different. "We're all trained musicians," Johnson says with easy pride, "But we're street-trained too. We can go anywhere in the world; our sound will be recognized." Marie Elsie St. Legér







# GANG RELATED

THE BEST PLACE TO HIDE IS BEHIND A BADGE

**COMING THIS FALL** 



Atlanta warehouse practice room, "When I write a song, I room. When I wint a song, I con a linearly feet and the parts in heard has been an influence my head, he says. "You just have to press things together differently, life activates the sampler drawn in eachine poised next to him. Juke, for example, why mit we a table accomplete why mit we are table accomplete why mit was a table accomplete which was a table accompl

ways to push the confines of pop. "Everything I've ever on me," he says, "If I'm riding In the car with my mom, listening to the radio, I'll eventually find something that resonates

Rock fans may recall Ryan

of internal and external pressures in 1993. (Ryan Harris also toured with Dionne Farris's road band in '94 and penned two songs on her acclaimed Wild Seed-Wild Flower LP.) For those folks, this particular Ryan Harris solo outing may seem like a curveball: Whereas places you didn't expect."

chords ("If I Had a Dime"), sublime rhythms ("Sleep," "Change"), and beguiling melodies ("Nothing More to Say"), It's from early influences like Bad Brains that Ryan Harris culled the "Idea of shifting rhythms, taking the songs

for Now I had a race-car mentality," he says. "I was into the stage-diving, Fishbone-type experience, But I still loved Steely Dan and Gino Vannelli. and I still had that Jon Mitchell influence. Now I can show the other side of what I'm about." Tony Green



My car is one and a half tons of hard-tempered steel, blinding polished throme and road - eating rubber undiluted by crappy paper speakers. Most speaker conso are made from paper. Paper is the makerial used for personal used for several most representations of the paper of the formal personal pe This, the first many density from the movesteeth of temperature or mitteeth of temperature or mitteeth of temperature or mitteeth of temperature were. Bush our might and for mitteeth of temperature from the mitteeth of temperature from the mitteeth of temperature or temperature from the mitteeth of the temperature or the mitteeth of the temperature or the mitteeth of the temperature or the mitteeth of the mitte just the right cone for each prequency or music type.

paper is also used for kitty litter coupons. Just thought you'd like to know,









#### Kirk Franklin puts the "go" back into gospel. But can he keep the faith *and* keep it real? Alan Light goes on the road with one helluva Christian soldier. *Photographs by Dah Len*

In pulls away from the MTV studios and into New York City traffic. Its star inhabitant, just in from London, pops a new remix of his histingle into the tape deck. He and his entourage-including his label president, giddy with news that the latest album has passed the million-sold mark-discuss how to contact some designers they'd like to hit up for some new gear.

Sound like just another day in the music biz? Listen doser. Now, the artist and his crew are laughing uproaniously, joking about what kind of music King David was listening to during the biblical episode in which he, the king, dances right out of his clothes. "Think he had on Calvin Kleins?" queies a friend. "No," chortles the star, his eyes dancing. "King David definitely would have wom Versace!"

The performer in question is not your ordinary gat-toting rapper or this week's hot R&B love man. The gentleman in the sharp suit and black Kangol is Kirk Franklin, 27, the best-selling gospel artist in history. As we cruise through Midtown Manhattan,

"Stomp," his collaboration with the young choir is almost account of the property, the country, most played to known as God's Property, the country's most played song on RaB radio. The exultant video, which fine the property of the proper

Such success inn't completely new to Kirk Frank. In: Two of his allows with his more conventional choir, the Family, have also gone platinum, and his 1993 single: "Why We Sing" was a significant radio 1993 single: "Why We Sing" was a significant radio 1993, and 1994 the significant radio 1994 the significant radio 1994 the significant radio 1994 the significant radio 1994 some level of 1994 significant radio 1

popularity

At MTV, Franklin was in full comedian mode, chowing down a hot dog in the lobby and cracking jokes with innocent victims on his way to a quick interview with MTV News. On top of his usual bouncing off-the-walls energy, though, Franklin had reason to be especially awake this particular moming: He and God's Property had got upeat yto perform an abridged version of "Stomp" on Line With Regis and Kabiki Long.

Kathie Lee Gifford, all hair, teeth, and tan (and sometime Christian recording artist herself), started getting a little sanctified during the song, dancing and clapping—not quite on beat, but excited nonetheless. After the song's conclusion, she breathlessly asked Franklin, "So this song is really number one? On the pop charts?"

"Yes, ma'am," Franklin replied, not bothering to correct her slight exaggeration. Kathie Lee paused a perfect beat and, to the delight of the choir, deadpanned. "God does work in mysterious ways." good pal and black pop have never strayed too far from each other. Historically, most ReB singers have grown up singing industry, silled way attest from Snoop to Lil' Kim have sung in the choir as kids. And the two games have me in the middle any number of times, from the Teddy Riley-produced Return by the Winnas, in 1999, to LL Cool J's 1991 that's The Power of God. "Sixter Rosetta Tharpe was a pop sensation in the yos, the Edwin Hawkins Singers." Oh, Happy Day" was a chart smash in 1972, and the Clark Sisters." You Brought the Sunshine" lit up discoss in 1982. And who could forget McL. Hammer's 1999 "Fray."?

Soill, here has never been anything quite like "Stomp." All of those previous efforts have mancked of either crossover dreams or novelty appeal. God's Property—a openmehre, Nike rochicing choir, ages 16-47, many of whom are former gang-banger and drug abusers assembled in Dallas by knohoteacher Linda Seanght—are true children of both Jesus and hip hop, and the resultant fusion feels natural, organic, real. Powered by a bouncing Fankadelic sample, "Stomp" is a contemporary-sounding record with an irresiatible hook. But with the rasps-voiced Franklin shouting,"Have a Holy Chost part yow with me," and the choir calling out, "We having church, we ain't going nowhere," the message still cust through the best loud and dear.

Video-friendly image aside, "Stomps" came along duing a spirtular nensisance in urban music. Franklin explains the phenomenon with a simple principle: supply and demand. "We've tried experiting else. We've tried crack; we've tried politics, black rights, gay rights, this, that. But you can only drink so long, screw so long, buy so many clothes. It doesn't satisfy the total man." Franklin and God's Property are offering direction to a community that has apparently come to a crossroads. Maybe, after some hanget, the urban audience is finally ready to feel the warmth of that oft-time religion, to trade in part of its onli for some iov.

But Franklin's platinum-plus ministry is hardly being met with open amis in the traditional Christian world. "Too worldly" is the criticism often leveled at him. "It's music that gets you up and gets you moving but to what and for what?" asks Dwight Andrews, a Christian minister and professor of music at Atlanta's Emory University. "Does it shalleng young people spiritually or intellectually's Some people feel that the message of Stomo' is a nortex morn message."

Franklin is adamant, however, that his appearance, his language, and his beats never water down his praise for Jesus, and that all he's doing is reaching out to an audience the church has neverembraced. "Now, you're going to have some little girls watching the videos," he says, "and saying, "You mean, I can wear pants and still love Jesus' Because I got to a church that don't allow girls to wear pants." Come on, man, that's setting hem free."

Chept<sup>17</sup> Saln <sup>1</sup>, James, who was introduced to Franklin's music by he hardresser, thinks that his success in't just a result of the music but also of the new-school message in his words. Whereas conventional gospel and spirituals often emphasize overcoming adversity or oppression, Franklin's songs are celebrations. "It's not about slavery and the old ways," Salt says, "Young people don't want to sing 'We Shall Overcome. 'We feel like we have overcome, and we're looking for inspired." tion and empowerment. Kirk brings lots of fun to it."

Franklin accounts for his popularity in a slightly different way. "People need to get high off something spirtual, and I'm the holy dope dealer," he says between bites of a cheesesteak in his New York hotel room. "I got this drug, I got this Jesus rock. And you can have a type of high that you've never experienced."

ne of the few things hotter than the God's Property album is Texas in July. The thermometer in Franklin's black Range Rover says it's 108 degrees outside. "It's so hot," he cries, "it makes you feel like you done something wrong!"

Franklin takes advantage of a rare day at home in the well-to-do Dallas suburb of Arlington by taking his familly-the ones with the lower-case F-for a portrait session. With his lovely wife, Tammy, Kirk gathers up son

"People need to get high off something spiritual, and I'm the holy dope dealer. I got this drug—Jesus rock. And you can have a type of high that you've never experienced."

Kertion, age nine, and daughters Carrington, eight, and two-month-old Kennedy for a morning at a local photo studio. After a family lunch at a Mexican restaurant, we're back in the mind-melting heat, and Franklin, dressed in a green Hilfiger goff vers over a T-bith, soon, and sandals, is giving a tour of his old neighborhood, a straggly area outside Fort Worth called Riverside.

This ain't no Shao Lin, now," he says. "I don't have those RZA aories." But as we pasts field beigh nous where he lived for 22 years, it's evident that young Kink's life was far from easy. "Where I've been was painfuldod, year," he says, "I was painful to be looft that my mother didn't want me. It was painful to be sventeen years old, slip up and get a girl pregnant, then walk into church and [have] everybody look at you like you're going to hell."

The support in Franklin's life came from his greataunt Gertrude, who took him in when she was 64 years old after his parents abandoned him. She collected cans to pay for his piano lessons and had him singing in church at age four. Riverside was rough; but when the drug dealers started moving in on the local streets, olderfolks like his adouted mother ran them off.

Franklin grew up in the church, leading his first choir at age 11. But that was mostly a job to him—"One hundred dollars a month when you're in the sixth grade? That's a lot of cheddar. What were the shoes then? Zips...." And as he came of age, Franklin yearned to walk on the wild side.

"See, when I was coming up," he says, "the guys in church were considered say, sissies. So whatever it took for me to prove that I wan't that, that's what I did. From trying to sleep around, drink, go to clubs, smoke. Man, when I was in high school, I was called gay so much that I used to wake up in the morning crying and begging my mother not to send me to school. And it got to the point that one monting, she didn't force me.

"The boys in church used to jump me. So, by the time I got to the sixth grade and everybody was smoking and drinking and stuff, I wanted to be down. I wanted to show that I wasn't no punk."

So, Kirk would lead the choir and then hang out with the homies. Then one day, in the summer of 1985, when he was 15, a boy Franklin knew was digging for a tape in his closet and a gun fell out, went off, and killed him. "He wasn't even a close friend," Franklin says, "but he was the first young guy lever knew that died."

In an instant, everything changed for the confused church boy. "It was in my mother? does when I heard about it, and I just got on my knees and asked the Lord to forgive me for all my past screwups and [said] that I wanted to accept lims any savior. And that was it. The first thing that left me was smoking weed—just like that. And then I stopped drinking, Going out left slower because I lowed to go to clubs and dance, but even that appetite slowly left me."

We turn a comer, and Franklin sees a distant relative, an old woman sitting on her porch in a housedress. He pulls over and she playfully berates him for not bringing her a video. They look through some family pictures, and he borrows one to make a copy—a sho of a bunch of kids, Kirk all the way to one side, smilingbut clearly not quite one of the gang. Then he stops to chard and sign some autographs for a pack of girls walking home from school.

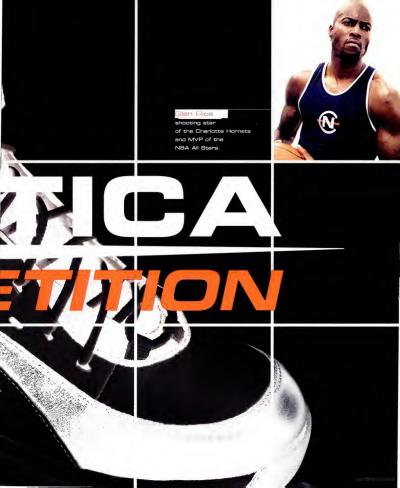
Franklin seems to enjoy all the ribbing and reminiscing, like he needs it to say grounded and to show the old neighborhood that he's not on some star trip. But there seems to be something he's also trying to prove to himself with visits like this. He drifts in and out of thought driving the streets of Riversido.

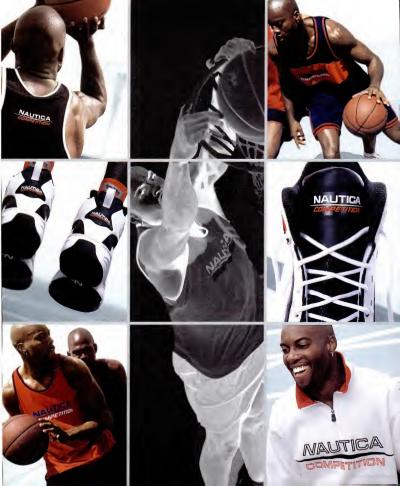
"You know what the funny thing is?" he says. "None of these people liked me when I was growing up here."

This is it," Kirk Franklin says, spreading his arms wide. "This is where I first knew that I was strange." Franklin rests his trim five-foot-four-inch frame in the front pew of the Greater Strangers Rest Baptist Church, located in Lake Como, a neighborhood considerably more dangerous than Riverside. The chapel

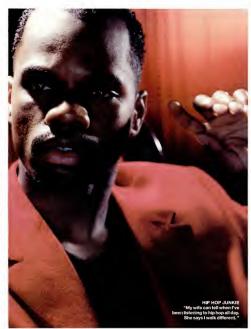












itself is simple, somewhat run-down, with white concrete walls and worn blue-green carpet.

Sitting next to Franklin is the Reverend R.E. Wet, a pleasant, round man in a Kitk Franklin and the Family Tabirt, whom Kirk calls' the closest thing I had to a father." West took Franklin in as choir director when Franklin was 8 and gettling really senious about music. In addition to a choir with a strong history, Greater Strangers had something rare in Baptist churches—afful time rhythm section. With talented voices and bigger instrumentation, Kirk Franklin, raised listening to gospel in the church and hip hop on the streets, started to blossom.

"I could tell, and everybody else could tell, that the way I wanted to do music was not the norm," Franklin says, leaning forward in the pew. "'He's playing that piano real bluesy, and he's up in the pulpit dancing!' they'd say. But Pastor West saw something. He knew it even before I did."

even betore I did.

Reverend West says the result of Franklin's new compositions was a congregation divided along generational lines. The older people were horrified," he remembers. "But the majority of the younger people loved it. It gave them a chance to free themselves in worship, to cast off their cares and stand up for the first time and dance and orsise."

Despite the resistance of the church clders, word started to spread about Franklin's choir, and the seats in Greater Strangers started to fill. Things were changing for Franklin too: Kerrion was born when he was left to the and the boy's mother remain friends) and his adopted mother died when he was 20. Music was play-

ing a more central role in his life. He was devoting more attention to his own songwriting than to tending to the choir director's usual role of arranging traditional hymns.

Franklin put together a new choir ounside the church and named it the Family. "Named to create something as wild, as abstract, as me, "he says. His songs for the Family have strong, clear melodies and straightforward, memorable Christian carchphrases("I sing because I'm happy," "I'd arther have Jesus than silver and gold!"), and the intensity and exuberance of their concerts is the stuff of legend A recent, not Focking stop on the Tour of Life with Yolanda Adams and Fred Hammond at New York's Beacon Theater, part of a record-breaking, as onight stand, was equal parts vaudeville, revival meeting, and Shoutime at the Applia, with Franklin—at true Mc in every sense of the term—working the stage like along lost member of Run-Do.

Vicki Mack Latillade, a former RCA executive who started the Gospo Centric label in her Los Angeles basement with 56,000 bornwed from her father's post office persion, approached Franklin after heaning a "very, very rough" demo tape. Though she had never seen him perform live and admitted that she couldn't match the money other labels were offering, she promised that she would work hader and longer than arounce cles.

"When I heard them singing 'Silver & Gold'," she says, her eyes moistening as she recalls her early days with Franklim, 'I heard a person talking about issues I could relate to. For so long, [goopel singers] hadn't been talking about why they do what they do." Contemporary goopel, Lataillade felt, had lost its way, Franklin represented a return to somethine more concrete.

After praying on it, Franklin signed with Cospo-Centric. The first abum they released, 1993; Kné Franklin and the Family has sold more than a million copies. Last year's platinum Watthe Lookin', is still on Billbeard's Baß charts nearly yo weeks after it dropped. Oh, and in case you forgor that it's all about the Benjamins whether the source is gospel or gangsta, please note: Lattaillade says thats he has repeatedly had bri life theracened by other record labels wanting to snatch up her star attraction.

like any card-carrying member of the Hip Hop Nation, Kirk Franklin is obsessed with Keeping It Real. "Honestly," "To be honest," "Let's be raft these phrases pepper his conversation constantly. He also Keeps up with the latest records; raves about Scarface's new single or Timbaland's beats. Tupac's Makener'd disc is stiting in his car, but Franklin maintains that he won't be seen bumping some obscenityfilled track at stoppight. "I'll overdook a couple of case words, like on the Wyclef album—which I think is a work of art," he says.

"I can't lie and tell you that I've stubbed my toe and all said was God dog! or Aw, shuck!" Franklin antests, "but I have to be wise about when and where I listen to hip hop. I got a responsibility: I have to be consistent. And I have to monitor how much I listen to because my wife can tell when I've been riding around listening to ahip hop CD all day. She says I walk different."

One thing that Franklin doesn't share with some of the hip hop community, however, is an attraction to the



religious organization that has made a point of reaching out to urban America: the Nation of Islam. "I think the majority of black people, if you got them in a room by themselves, would tear up a pork chop-bacon, sausage links, pigir feet, "he says, smiling but dead serious." But the Nation stands for something that's strong. And it started to stand for something strong when the church started entity weak.

"But are you really setting a man free when you just set him mentally free? The spirit is still captive. Look at Mike Tyson. They got him when he walked out [of prison]. He was supposed to be this new man-submissive, tolerant. But when the boo-boo hit the fan, the rage still existed. The black man has a lack of father figures. and that's what the Nation represents. But I honestly don't think that's what sets men free." Faith in Jesus is what Franklin is all about-"Jesus is the bomb," he says-although he prides himself on "not forcing Him down anyone's throat '

Ironically, one of Franklir's bigger commercial peckalhoughs came coursey of Louis Farnkhan. When Farnkhan was scheduled to appear on "The Asenio Islall'Show" in 1994, many other quests refused to share the stags with him. Farnkhan himself asked if Krik Franklin could be the music guest then reparklin could be the music guest that night. Franklin accepted the invitation, despite the protests and picken countries of the studio, resulting in his first exposure on national television. Sales and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and and the studio, resulting in his first exposure on studion all relivision. Sales and and the studios. The studios are studios and the studios.

Over and over, Franklin says that the only thing he refuses to do it compromise. He may be doing something no one has ever done, taking gospel places it's neer' been, but he will not alter his dedication to his principles—and this, he says, is why the beats don't matter, the clothes don't matter. As long as his heart is with lessus, he's shapp, it's this devoto on that got him through a near-fatal fall off a stage in Memphis last November, after which he want't expected to walk to ralk again, much less make music. "That was a graduation," he says. "Every night 1'd get up and preche Jesus it real. But then when I fell, I laid there in a puddle of blood and I saw lesus is real."

And this absolute conviction in his beliefs led him, earlier this year, to the most difficult decision of his professional life. UPN had signed him to do a sixtom in which he would play a pastor. Thm not going loit end say lwan't excited, "he says, "but even the early procedures were real bumpy because left like! was being treated like this little nigger lid." First, he says, the show's executive producer Ed Weinberger (Taxi, Amer, Lov) watted a cut of his publishing rights. Then, when Franklin read the script for the show's pilot, the real trouble started.



The plot called for one of the members of Franklin's choir to reveal to the pastor that he's gay and to ask if he could bring his lover to church. Franklin's scripted response was, "That's perfectly normal," Franklin balked. "Let me stress to you that I'm not homophobic," he says, his slight stammer growing more pronounced as he gets worked up. "I have very good friends who are gay. They know that I don't agree with that lifestyle, but I don't beat them, I don't cuss them out. And one thing I know is that Christians before me have not made it easy for me, bombing abortion clinics and whatever, and that because of that, people have gotten turned off. So I know that I have to be very sensitive not to lose people to my message. And the church community would have eaten me alive if I had said that was 'perfectly normal.'

"My own personal belief," he goes on, "is that I don't believe that a person is long ay. That's what I believe, that's what I study. That don't give me the right to condemn you, but I do believe there's a better way. However, I also don't want to come across the gay community as a gay basher, because I'm not." He spoke to Weinberger about the issue and proposed a different story line in which he saved the gay choir member from a mob, but Weinberger refused to make any changes. Franklin, in turn, walked away from the deal

The admantly denies that his own adolescent experiences as the victim of a kind of ayo bashing had any effect on his beliefs or his handling of the UNN situation. But as someone whose own credo is built around the inclusion of those usually ignored by the church, he is clearly still struggling to find an appropriate or consistent was to address gay issues or, for that matter, gay Christians.

"For me, that was even bigger than the fall," Franklin say, "in terms of knowing where my own heart is.1 know I don't hate gays. But I had to walk away from the table with people thinking that I do." Franklin has since signed a deal with Universal Television to develop another series, which he compares to the Carly show. It remains to be seen how long the race for ratings and Franklin's faith can peacefully occasis.

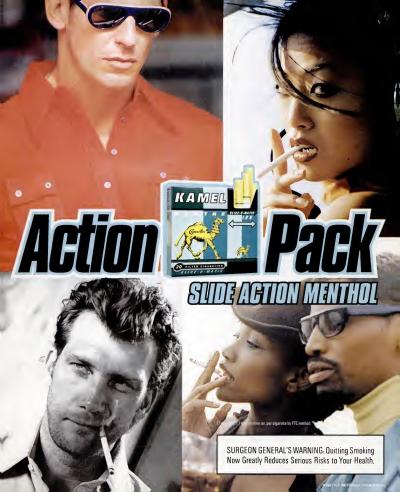
ack in New York, Kirk Franklin calls me over to the hotel room window and looks at the crowd buzzing near Times Square 42 stories below. He's getting tired. The travel, the touring, and the TV spots are catching up with him.

"Sometimes, I don't want to be Superman, but I always have to be," he says quietly. "I got women coming up to me after concerts asking for autographs, and I know they want more than an autograph. But I've got re-

sponsibilities. I have to say [he points to his weedding ring], You got to go. I can win more people with the walk than with the talk. Anyone can talk it. I know plenty of folks at church screwing all over the place. People are tired of that.\*

Franklin talks about building youth centers for inner-city Christian kids, giving them something to do besides just read the Bible-somewhere to go to dance, roller-shate, and watch 'positive' videos. Something to compete with the sex, drugs, and negative imagery being thrust at them constantly. There's so much work to dr., be assy with a sigh and points down to the street. "Look at these people, all chasing the almighty dollar. How many of them have joy in their hearts? How many of them will go home and take their kids to the movies?

"You got to have a vision," says Kirk Franklin—a your soul, help hip hop heal its wounds after all the bloodshed, and stomp out the devil every time he bings the joyful noise. "I don't know why law chosen-there are others, many, who are more talented than me. But the Bible says, Where there is no vision, the people will perish." You gotta keep dreaming." "D



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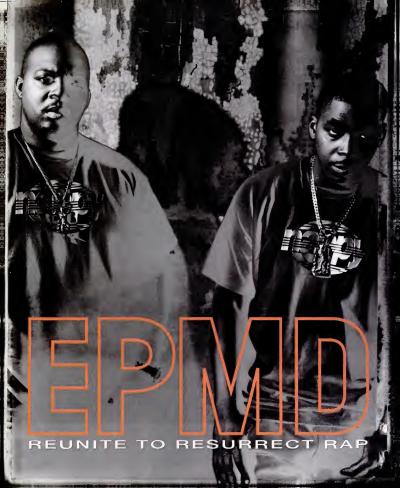


Non-Stop



## Action .





## FIVE LONG YEARS AGO, THE FUNK LORDS KNOWN AS EPMD CALLED IT QUITS AMID RUMORS OF ALL-AROUND SHADY BUSI-NESS, DOES THEIR REUNION MARK THE BEGINNING OF RAP'S REBIRTH? MARCUS REEVES EXPLORES THE POSSIBILITIES

hen a wiry production assistant standing in front of a newly reunitde Enick Sermon and Parish Smith yells "Makeup!" the word transforms and ricochets off Chamber Paper Factory's peeling walls. The word expands and turns into far more than a request for face powder. It speaks for the huddled hip hop masses—here in Brooklyn and elsewhere who've been wishing FFMD would, make the high and the parties of the production of

On the set of the video for "News Yeen Before," EBMD's first single in five years, the atmosphere is one of nostalgia. From their matching, crisp, classe denim suits to the title of their new album, Badi in Business (whe else'), to the dank, deteriousing health hazard they chose as a location to "keep it undergound," everything seems intact from the old days—at least, on the surface. The mood's undercurrent, though, is one of uncertainty, even vulnerability.

"Action" yells video director Steven Carr, and EPMD return like magic to their former glory. The music blasts, and rg/s superduo are reatminsted like as Wu-Tang single taken off pasues. What rides from the speakers, though, is pure EPMD: thuggish narest syvered with 100-widing, wall-wall guistar. It's a simple, bouncy funk-fest, complete with Parnish's seem cadence and Eric's smust mouth delivers, It's another page from the Zapp-dipped musical guidebook the two have been faithful to for the past to years, together and quart.

A short time later, Erick and Parnish are sitting side by side in a trailer during a break in filming. They look nervous. Erick is toying with his gold muscle man medallion while Parish literally is wiping beads of sweat from his brow. A mel ange of on lookers is gazing in at them, their eyes unblinking. Arynone who read about the hostle split between this once in oracle crew of two has got to be wondering whether it's money or friendship that has brought them back together. And why now?

"(We got back together) for hip hop," Parrish saye. "After the shit that was happening—the Tupac incident, the Biggie Smalls murder, and the whole nine—it made us more eager to come back and fix rap," Fixit?" I can't really say fix rap," Parrish clarifies carefully." But get back to what rap was like when EPMD was around. "Can it be that it was all so simple then?

When EPMD parted ways, in 1992, they abruptly extinguished one of his plot plot mot consistent track records four traw gold albums in a 1700-all of them classic—1988's Structh Business, 1985's Unfinished Business, Business as Dialel (1994), and their fourth (1994) to 1994's Business New Protond, which was the Business and their fourth (1994) to 1994's Business New Protond with the New Part of their parts in the four years they record color gother, Erick (4.8 k. E. Deuble) and Partirish & a. PMD) soid a little over two million albums. They helped define the formative years of middle school high loop, with all its swing and bases bottom funk.

Originally signed with the independent Steeping Bag Records, in 1988, FFMD came into his plop as it was morphing into a Jame Brown-sampled Wonderland; rap had got soulful again after the genre-bending meganices of Run-D M.C. Before West Coast Grap was defined by George Clinica samples and P-Funk sound bines, FPMD had created a niche for themselves as the "original funk lords," milking the board has plot such classics as 1988 and "Volu Gots to Calif.", 1991 s" "Hardcore," and "I'l's Going Down," in 1992. "They broke the funk mold," says Mobb Deep's Prodigy, "EPMD was the niggas that inspired us as a duo."

Steeping Bag rolled up in 1984, after Unfaithed Business had just gone gold. Del Jam bought their construct and agood the himmaking rates to a five-album deal. Accound that time, Erick and Particif formed the Hit Squid, at tight-kini thyme clan that included Das EFR, Redman, and the off-forgotten K-Solo. Clearly reminiscent of Marley Marl's histor Crew or KRS's Boogie Down Productions, the Squid had a slightly different purpose to protect one another and the hardcors sound that kept their followers heads bobbing. While fellow Long ladnoter Public Enemy were callingtout America's racial politics, the EPMD squadron were buttling the maintream's facination with onto threshearing appear talk wound grand filmer Loc.

By the time they released Business Never Personal, EPMD had begun taking more control of their, well, business. They managed themselves, as well as the members of the Hit Squad, through the duo's newly formed compuny, Shuma Management. Das FSV. Palet Svioms (EastWest) debut want platinum, and Redman debuted with his gold-selling Winst Thee Album (Def Jam). No longer touring with the likes of Run-D.M.C., EFMD, along with their self-syled family, commanded an audence of their own. Ends and Parish had finally artived—without compromise. But right when EFMD and the Hit Squad were at their apec, Erick and Parish called it quist.

n the suburbs of Dix Hills, Long Island, Enick is the first to arrive at Mirror Image Recording Studios, which is tucked in the basement of a quaint one-story home. Putting his backpack on a table and removing a notebook full of rhymes, he's prepared for what will be a long recording session. His movements are short, almost arxivost.

At the video shoot the day before, a label representative made it clear that the two were refusing to scommodate request for separate interview.—They wish to present a united front. But what could have been a nawkward moment turns out not to be. Semon wants to talk about the reunion. Alone. Minus the hoopla of the video shoot, Semon is open and relaxed—but copy.

"It was the day after the 'Head Banger' video shoot, 'he begins, recalling the day EMD dissolved." I got arrested for accusation [soi of what
happened to Parrish and shir. The police told me they had statements on
me. 'Several months pior to the feelsoor of Banison's New Promad, Parrish's
Long Island home was broken into, reportedly by several armed men.
Although nothing was tolen, when a couple of the suspects were apprehended by police, Erick Sermon's name came up during questioning.
Things booked even more suspicious when Parrish, who wan't there the
night in question, recognized several of the suspects as Erick's succitaes.
"Teally an't home who the fuch they were," explains Erick, wiping his face."

"I was just put into somethine,"
Enick was arrested the following day, but the matter was eventually
dropped. The bitter steeds of dissension, however, had been deeply sown.
The group was gorna break up anyway, "Enick says, stressing that the
break in was the beakingpoint in an already strained relationship. There
was just too much tension, and it was going on for years. I aim't understand
what was going on. It was too much one-sided thit.

what was going oil, it shis contractions—and to do with Shuma. The company was devixed to make sure everyone got their correct monies, but Ends says that, for a long time, he and others felt Parins, but must president, wasn't distributing the wealth fairly. "There were different views on how things were run. People in the organization, my family—they always thought things wasn't distribution."

And they weren't. After EPMD's breakup, Erick discovered he had no ownership of Shuma and also tound himself near broke, with nothing more than "a thousand dollars and a credit card." But Erick secept some of the blame for not protecting his town neck. "It was shiply my fault for not knowing or even paying attention to trying to get my money," he says. "I wan't two giny my opinion about nothing, I shought it wann't my job's and the company an

Åthhough Parnish refuses to talk about EPMO's past financial conflicts when he arrives in Dax about true latte, he has alreoly stated his side. In a 1995 interview published in 77m, Parish described a situation where all business transactions and suzeable parchases required both his nit E'visign natures. TEMO is a fifty-fifty split, "he said in the fittinh 2mm. As far as ment of the fittinh 2mm. As far as ment of his fittinh 2s and the said of th

Festering hostilities eventually divided the house, and sides had to be chosen. Redman stayed with Erick to form Def Squad. K-Solo and Das EFX stuck by Parrish, maintaining the Hit Squad name. In the end, Erick





rode around in Parrish's car, smoked a blunt, went to his parents' house. And then we just talked."

Smith finally arrives at the studio. With Das ERX's Skoob and Dray plus a couple of other fineds in tow, the's in good spirits, he apologize for his lateness and gives Erick's pound. Taking a seat next to his partner, he leans forward like he's ready to talk. Erick retreats into his book of thymes. Suddenlythey are EPMD—no longer just Erick Sermon and Parrish Smith.

Decked in a red T-shirt, red-white-and-blue shateball short, and with a black-band annaticd around his head, Parrish gives off no "negational redvises-he never really does. He's chilling. When dacussing matters, especially ones associated with PBMD, Parrish is the streetwise diplomat; joival butcushioning his language with codes, hip hope to the parrish of the parrish red to the parrish of the phone call from Erick, he answers with a smile. Feverthing in the whole situation feld (HE PBMD.)

"Iwas more or less like the 'Big Paybak,' "Basrikwa more or less like the 'Big Paybak,' "Basrikh continues, referring to the pair's centingly smooth road to Reunionville, "EPMD is abing and ofus. Sowhen the call came through, in itsu, like, Yah, yo, What up 'Be' was just kicking tiand closing the pape. "He pauses," Transa, you can't be angy! I think, personally, the whole situation was a group when we were seventeen, and things staral paying when we were seventeen, and things staredhappening very fast. But my lope for Fig. kit. Insequent the parties of the parties of the parties of the star in the parties of the parties of the parties of the star in the parties of the parties of the parties of the form in the parties of the parties of the parties of the form in the parties of the parties of the parties of the form in the parties of the parties of the parties of the form of the through the parties of the parties of the parties of the form of the parties of the parties of the parties of the parties of the form of the parties of th

Erick sits quietly while Parish does most of the talking, which gives the impression that things have been worked out between the twy, they we confortably recreded into their familiar reles within EPMD. Parish has always been the due's voice and Erick the quietle inseurant. What's different now, however, is that they've faced their past friction instead of pretending it didn't exist. "We already know how our minds are set up." Parrish asys." And to dwell on negative, well... negative on top of negative only leaves negative the haspened on the past, we gott as do this EPMD album, 'that's not happening either, because the chemistry wouldn't be there."

A lot has changed in hip hop since the breakup of EPMD. New groups are forging ahead, and millions of new fans have joined the ranks, many who enlisted after EPMD were no more. "I'm a little nervous to be back," Sermon says, "I always think about that because we left at a peak in our careers, when we were hot. People have had new music thrown in their faces every day, and you wonder [whether] our fans are still around. We may have quite a few, but we really have to be reintroduced to the public." So it's not business as usual? "It is different now for EPMD," Erick says, huddled over the mixing board, "We have individual careers, Everybody has their own personal shit. I got my shit. [D] Scratch got his shit. And Parrish got his. So there's no pressure on anybody. Everybody collects their own dough; takes care of their business. And everything will run smoothly."





MIX A CLOSE GROUP OF DIVINE LADIES WITH SOME FINE, INTELLIGENT GENTLEMEN AND TOSS IN A BOTTLE OF UNIQUELY MELLOW TANDUERAY MALACOA GIN. BLEND IT ALL WITH A PINCH OF RÅB. AS THE ESSENCE OF THE EVENING RISES TO THE TOP, KEEP THE COVER ON THE MALACA TO TRAP THE SUBTLE SOPHISTICATION. SHAKE LIBERALLY BEFORE SERVING.







scheduled for release this fall.

As Loub Vega's protegbe, India
made her mark in the mid-'80s as a
freestlye singer. After racking up
underground club hits like '
'Dancing on the Fire' and '
'Can't Get No Steep, 'India graduated to salsa, and her 1994
album Dicen Que Soy burned up
Billboard's Latin charts. The lively
Dicen spawmed three Top 10 Latin
hits and established india as the
princess of salsa.

"Interesting to the princes of the princes of salsa."

"I tapped into salsa when there weren't a lot females involved in It—except, of course, Celia Cruz," says the sassy star. "I took my [free] style and brought it to salsa. When / [labels] realized that young people liked it, and they started seeing big sales, they all went tooking for the next India"."

But why, when the original is only? India switched gears last year, recording the melswitched gears last year, recording the mellow Jazzin with Tito Puente and the Count 
Basis Orchestra before hooking up again 
with Vega and Masters at Work for last 
spring's critically acclaimed Myvorcan 
Sout, which teatures such logendary 
artists as George Benson, Hilton Ruiz, 
Jocehyn Brown, and Roy Ayers, as 
well as Puente. "It was great opportunity to let the world know that 
New York has a sound," india says 
proudly," one that elevates different styles of music—dance, soul, 
funk, Latin, iazz."

at dayle is something that the raven-hained diva doesn't lack. Known for appearing onstage decked out in superbright gear with a cigar in hand, India says her image is definitely more substance than style. When I smoke, I light it up in the name of God and all my family members that are with Him now, and it gets so in Interes that people say! grow wings!" I believe the can fly. Andréa M. Dincian

CLIP INDIA Touch the sky PHOTOGRAPH BY RICARDO BETANCOURT







BACKSTREET BOYZ
"It's incredible when we do our music," says
Mr. Cheeks. "Every time we make a record, v
try and make it a celebration."

EVERYBODY LOVES THE LOST BOYZ. CHRISTIAN EX GOES INTO THEIR WORLD TO FIND OUT WHY



reaky Tah has an intimidating, penetrating stare, the type of which separates the stable from the shook. The Jamaica, Queens quartet known as the Lost Boyz are in a small conference room in a big office building in Midtown Manhattan. Tah is trancelike as Checks, his brother/point man, details some of the Lost Boyz exploist.

After a recent Manhattan show, some Lost Boyz' fans wanted to twist trees with them; wanted to momentarily step into the Lost world.

"It's like five different niggas asking you if you got Dutches, says Cheeks, his raspy voice swimming in a thick lake of B-boy colloquialisms. "Nobody wanna make a move. Me and Tah're like, 'Yo, let's roll.' We walk out the club, fired up. We seen two grimy niggas on the corner," Cheeks turns back to Tah, segueing fluidly, "-so you know why I bought the Guinness, right? Just in case a nigga wanna-" Cheeks doesn't finish the sentence, but a quick, violent raise of his arm and the bottle-breaking sound effects he releases paint a clear picture: The Lost Boyz spread love with a double-edge sword.

Pretty Lou reclines in his chair. long locks pulled back in a 'tail. errant strands swaying to and fro. Lou takes a first pull on the circulating stick of sensi, while DJ Spigg Nice, who completes the LB team, pays attention in silence. This is the day after the release of the Lost Boyz' second music offering, Love, Peace & Nappiness. Replete with easy-spread choruses that partying ruffnecks and inebriated military men on shore leave can appreciate. Peace & Nappiness doesn't stray too much from the music formula ("Lifestyles of the Rich and Shameless," "Jeeps, Lex Coups Bimaz & Benz") that pushed their debut, last year's Legal Drug Money, to gold status.

Though the group can't be accused of forging new aural avenues, theirs is a cause much more subversive: the finding of the proverbial oasis of good times within a desert of hardship. Somebody's finding the Los Boyz-Love, Peace O: Nappiness sold 200,000 units in its first month, behind the feel-good single of the same name. Connoctors of guided turbu-

lence, the Lost Boyz create soundtracks for an oxymoronic existence where chaos runs serene like the hum, rattle, and clamor of a homebound iron worm at three Long Island Teas past 2 a.m.; where a quiet night is the worst kind 'cause it could only mean trouble's brewing on the desolate, curved blocks of the 'hood they call home; and where solace can be found in glassine packets of cannibis while nappy-maned, clean-cut and hairdid young folk, dipped in the most choice hip hop regalia, bounce freely in the aroma to the sounds of night time coolousts.

"All that explains us to a tee," says Lou. "There's chaos, but we come together to ride the wave. We're like...trying to cage four tornadoes at the same time."

As the blunt gives birth to a cipher, puffy lips part to reveal hard, gold-tooth milles. The Lost Boyz take on the properties of nature itself. Cheeks and Tah come off as fire and water, respectively, with Tah's vocal spritzers taming the heat of his brother's singing stop-and-go orations. Spigs is Earth, a sound provider whose was selections serve as the playing field for II Becursions. And the behind-the-scene Lou plays like the wind, unseen but vital.

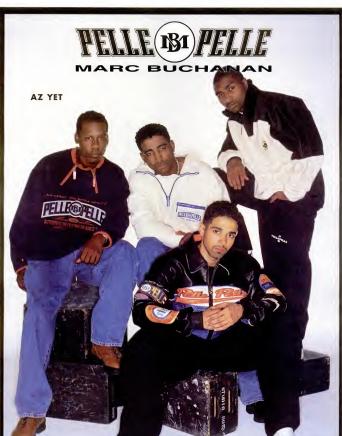
Being cousins and brothers, the group strengthened their bonds through liky—narrated, smoked-out hooky sessions at Lou's house. Spigg, who could always appropriate a whicke for a joy ride, would come through. Says Lou: "We went from [where] we couldn't leave the block together—'Don't leave the block together—'Don't leave they and, yal stays in the yard and palsy together,' or whatever—to "Yo, man, c"mon, Lou, you can't go outside, this is London! You can't goo outside, this is London! You can't goo out there by yourself."

It was through their various coming-of-age endeavors—Lou went to York College; Tah installed cable and was a carpenter; collectively, the four would often sell T-shirts—that the group came to find that music was in their cards.

"Tah used to do the beat box," recalls Cheeks of the days when they would take on competition in local parks. "When we was rhymin", he never even knew about the rhymes I was sayin', but he knew how to just hit me off, bless me with the backup words. Pm, like, How the fuck he know the words.

"You just have to see it," says the Lost Boyz' manager Charles Suitte. "I can't even explain how they do what they do." It's incredible when we do our

music," says Cheeks. "Every time we do a show, it's like a celebration. Every time we make a record, we try and make it like a celebration."



Art Director: Bernord G. Jocobs

Photo: Lonnie P. Porker



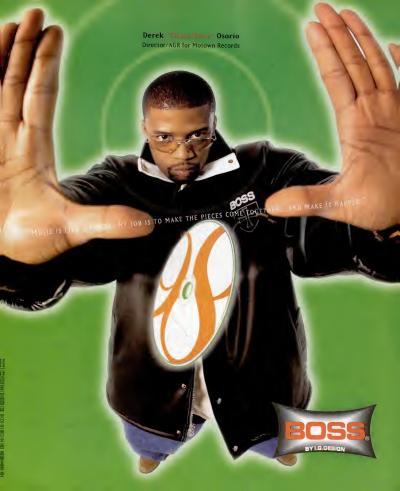






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erfect". That's the first word that comes to mind when describing the En Vogue mystique. Perfect makeup, hair, and trendsetting, body-revealing fashions. Perfect bodies, sparkling teeth, magnetic stage personalities. Perfect harmonics and pitch-a mellifluous blend of four strong voices that, when swirled together on digital tape, makes a boldly colorful yet precise composition, like an icecreamy Matisse canvas.

All that and a perfect beat, When "Hold On" hit the ground running in the summer of 1990, it changed modern R&B in two ways: One, it showcased a girl group who could truly sang, and two. it combined them with a track that sent B-boys The video for their first single, "Whatever," was not warmly received: there were even jokes about the girls' Thriller-esque hair and makeup. But more than anything else, En Vogue's change in fortune was driven home by the departure of Dawn Robinson, whose lead vocals had to be wiped off this new album at the last minute.

CINDY: You want people to like your music: but at the same time, you can't please everybody. If we're out of season, we have to be prepared for that-we've had a great run. We never had it in our minds that it was ever going to end. In our minds we were always going to continue. But as anickly as God vives all this to you, it can just as easily be taken away.

Tony Toni Toné producers were looking for a threegirl group that could become a LaBelle for the os-glamour with hip hop soul.

Six women showed up on audition day, all bom to sing. They holed up in the back of a beatup Mustang listening to Foster's poorly sung reference vocal, preparing to make a vocal dollar out of 15-cent conditions. "I wanted them so nervous that if any of them could still sing, they must be pretty good," Foster says, grinning. "I also wanted to see who would emerge as the leader."

That would be Cindy, a former hotel clerk, sometime TV actress, and classically trained soprano who'd been going cold to auditions for much of her childhood. Maxine was the diminutive hair-

The funky four are no more. What really led to the break of Bawn? And can the new En Vouce make it as a trio? Cher Hodari Color faces the music, Photographs courtesy of David LaChapelle

into a frenzy. From the a cappella "Who's Lovin' You" intro through Cindy Herron's expressive lead vocals, there were thousands of ways a DJ could cut up the song-something Terminator X proved throughout 1991's "Buck Whylin'." As their name suggested. En Vogue were a group with a cutting-edge vision but still firmly entrenched in a long soul tradition running through the Supremes and the Clark Sisters.

Though it's been five years since their last album, 1992's Funky Divas (which sold 3.5 million copies and generated three Top 10 singles), En Vogue are still the platinum standard by which female vocal ensembles are measured, TLC. SWV, and Xscape have posted comparable sales, and those pesky Spice Girls keep stealing moves from the EV playbook; but En Vogue built the stage upon which all others compete. Their recent reunion, though, has not exactly been like old times.

The new album, EV3, offers some nice hip hop loops and a passionate cover of Sophie B. Hawkins's "Damn I Wish I Was Your Lover," but ultimately, it does little to assure En Vogue's lofty perch in the girl-group pantheon. After posting strong sales the first week, EV3 soon began to slide down the charts. Much is riding on En Vogue's latest single, the power ballad "Too Gone, Too Long."

n a cavemous warehouse studio in Richmond, California, Terry Ellis, Maxine Jones, and Cindy Herron-Braggs (ages 30, 31, and 32, respectively) are putting it all back together, rebuilding their sound from the ground up.

While their founding producers, Denzil Foster and Thomas McElroy, finish up the music for another track, the women of En Vogue sit around the lounge of FM Studios-named for Foster and McElroy-resting their feet on the coffee table and watching BET's Planet Groove.

They're still incredibly pretty but look nothing like the weave-sporting, platform-wearing glamour queens the public has come to expect. None of them really likes to wear makeup; it reminds them of work. "Sometimes, women roll up on you when you're out," says Terry with a smile, "like, 'Are you the girl from En Vogue?' Then you hear them as they walk away saying, 'I told you she wasn't all that.'"

The girls ask each other questions, laugh easily, and seem genuinely happy to be in one another's presence again. They marvel at the fact that they're only a few miles from Starlight Studiosthe gloriously raggedy sound lab where their fairy tale began more than nine years ago.

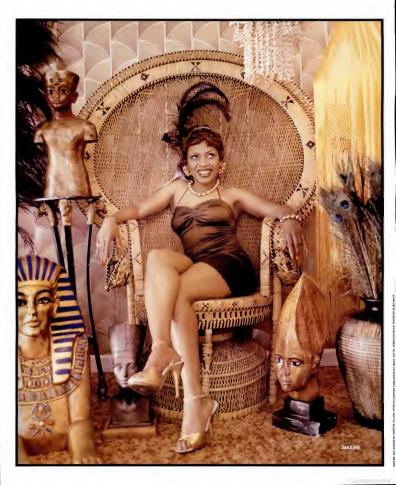
When Foster and McElroy were assembling their 1988 compilation project, FM2, the former dresser who'd gigged around town with Prince protégée Rosie Gaines. Twenty-year-old Dawn, a former Safeway checkout girl, was the sexy everywoman who could sing country and western, rock 'n' roll, and everything in between.

This was En Vogue-until Terry walked in and made a fourth spot where there was none. "I figured there was no way I was in," says Ellis, a former marketing major at Texas's Prairie View A&M University. "My plane from Houston was late, and auditions were almost over. But for some reason, Denny and Tommy let me sing anyway.

When Foster and McElrov heard Terry's grits 'n' gravy voice combined with Max. Cindy, and Dawn's, they almost fell off their chairs. "Something magical happened," Foster says. "They just had that 'it' factor.'

En Vogue's debut, Born to Sing, and their subsequent 1992 album Funky Divas sold a combined 4.5 million copies. It got to the point where you couldn't turn on MTV without seeing either the fierce "My Lovin' (You're Never Gonna Get It)" clip, the steamy "Giving Him Something He Can Feel," or the bodaciously wild "Free Your Mind." But the price of that otherworldly beauty was pain.

"The thing I remember about 'Free Your Mind' was that they had me in these pants that were so tight I could barely move," Terry says. "If you're in





a hairpiece, the pins are pulling your hair back, and, after a while, you can feel them pressing down into your scalp."

"My feet were killing me during that video," Cindy recalls with a wince. "I had these marks all over my legs."

"My heels were really high," says Max, "and after a while, one of them broke. But I kept doing the routine with one on and the other off. Each of us had to give one hundred percent. They made us work."

Then, at the height of their popularity, after selling out venues nationwide, winning MTV and Soul Train wards, and being nominated for a Grammy, the members of En Vogue pulled the emergency brake and started what would become a good long hiatus.
"Cindy had Donovan," Max 23ys," and while we were

"Cindy had Donovan," Max says, "and while we we renegotiating our contract, I got pregnant myself."

"I just said, Yall have the babies, I'm gonna make a record," Errey says with a laugh But Souther Bert flacid logs soloeffort, produced by McEltry and Foster (who, at that time, was Terry's man in and out of the studio) did not catch fire. Perhaps it's just as well. She says she felt uncomfortable singing alone: "I always alone and myself looking over my shoulder toward the wings-looking for the girls."

MAXINE: Dawn is our sister, and we've been through so much together. To me, if feels like a tremendous loss. Part of webo we are is her. She helped build En Vogen. She just had a passion for being solo; it's a passion that all of us felt at one time or another, but hers was greater. Maybe we can all come back together one day and he a group a gain.

In late 1996, all four members of En Vogue got together again to complete an album that was going to be called Friendship. They recorded a hit single, "Don't Led Go (Love)," that they performed at the 1997 Soul Train Awards. It was the latum they say good train Awards. It was the latum they say googher in public. But as the album was being completed, Dawn secured a deal with Dr. Dr. & Aftermath outfit. There was no time to remove her background vocals from the album, which was retitled EV.

There are no hard feelings, the girls of En Vogue say. Even though, after numerous requests, neither Dawn, her management, or her new label would address the reasons for her departure in any depth whatsoever.

"To support this album the way we'd like to required a full commitment—as long as two year—and that was something she didn't want to do," says Candy. "We were all taken aback by the length of time, but we wanted to sell a certain amount of records and make a certain amount of records and make a certain amount of roof sand make a certain amount of roof sand particles of the self-and the self-articles of th

Dawn's manager, Trudy Green, declined to be interviewed but faxed a statement that said Dawn was concentrating on her solo debut. That album, which will feature the work of Dr. Dre, Teddy Riley, and other topflight producers, is due sometime next year. In the meantime, Dawn can be heard belting out the chorus on the Firm's horne wDre-oroduced sinele. "Firm Biz."

Cindy says it's possible that the group might operate on a sort of revolving door status in the future. "We all have the option of doing a solo project after this album is finished," he says, "and I'm sure we'll do that. But I thinkwe'll all decide to come back as a group 'cause with out En Vogue, we would have never had that chance. I thinkit's important to get back to what the public wants—the whole ensemble."

Elektra Records CEO Sylvia Rhone, the woman who brilliand y engineered En Yogue's career, maintains that Dawn's departure does not affect the group. "You don't even notice it," she said during a phone interview. "No one's even checking for her. The group was never built on individuals; so even if it had been Clindy that wasn't there, and Dawn that was thee, it, it like, we still got three girls, and all three of those girls are so forceful, so over-powering. No one's missing the fourth member."

"The media and the label have painted it as an amicable breakup," says a source in Dawn's camp, "but it wasn't really like that. The members of the group have grown apart over the years. Dawn was reluctant to work with the same producers and stylists on this album.

"Plus, all the girls were mad about their contracts.
They sold three million albums and never felt like they saw anything back. Somehow, the people at the label convinced them to do this one album. They were almost finished recording it when it came time to sign the con-



tract. When Dawn saw it, she said hell no.
"In a lot of ways it's a blessing for Dawn to be out of
the group," says the friend. "She has phenomenal range,

the group," says the friend. "She has phenomenal range, and we always told her it was being wasted. But it was a shame it had to go down like that. She could have left the group before this album, but she gave them the benefit of the doubt."

According to one Elektra staffer, Robinson was paid a cash settlement upon leaving the group. Rhone does not deny this, but the label CEO says that she was "not privy to that." She also says she wishes Dawn all the best.

If the circumstance of Dawn's departure are murky, the result is clear. "It's a big spot to fill," Max says. "At first, it was kinda scary because her sound completed ours. Without Dawn, the middle harmony is missing, and there are times when two of us share the lead and there's only one of su lifeli lo keep the chous going. But we've been able to work it out. On Santaday Night Line, we had some presented we call for support, but they what of the presenced we call for support, but they enable they will be considered to the support, but they enable they will be considered to the support, but they enable they will be considered to the support, but they enable they because they will be considered to the support to the s

"I miss her," Cindy says. "There's a void there. And when I hear her voice in some of the songs on the album, it hurts. Each person added something special, and her voice was an important part of that. So she's doing her solo thing like Max and I will do one day. It's left open for her to come back, and she knows that. We'll all sing together again someday—I still feel that."

TERRY. To me, there's just pure joy in singing, It doesn't matter that it's my profession—singing is just singing. This industry will put you on a pedestal, It's a facedae, and it leavest you no room for mistakes. If you're doing this for the joy of doing the and not the money and the fame—you won't be affected. If a bejust as happy singing in the same nightclubs! used to before all this happened. Thu's real.

To truly know En Vogue, you must witness them in their purest element outside the recording booth: the photostudio. En Vogue photograph better than any group alive. It's the way they make each rehearsed pose seem natural, exuding sexual power with the slightest gesture—the curve of a back, the arch of an eyebrow.

After seven hours of preparation, they emerge from the dressing room in glamazon armor-all heels, hair, and painted faces. Troy Jensen, their long-term makeup artist, stands on the sidelines, watching their every move, ready toprovide aquick touch-up. "The reason it takes so long," he says, "is that we're talking about three different body types, different colors."

Jensen deserves much credit for the En Vogue mystique. They don't do any photo shoots without him. He's the one with the old movie-star scrapbooks, the Vargas poster books, the one who introduced them to the right French photographers and designers, helping shape their overall sense of style.

"I love to make En Vogue happy," he says. "They're the ones on-camera, onstage, and they have to be happy with their looks. At first, they were uniform, with one style to fit four women. Now, it's about each gift's personal style and voice. Terry's the Audrey Hepbum, then classy gift who's slowly allowed us to make he service. Toddy is they pour built, the hyper one; and Max is the smooth one, with a natural sensuality all her own."

So what was Dawn like?

Jensen pause before replying. Dawn was very furly, had a certain edge, "he say, "She's a perfectionist, and the and the and the world year into no all the time because she had very grong leds about what his wasted. That's what I love about her." He holds the company line, vouching that the trio have just as much charimas as the quarter. "They're magic regether," he says. "It's all about he bal-ance. Besides, nothing is going to damage what Dawn has do not for this group already." Then, as if in a trance, "She'll come had."

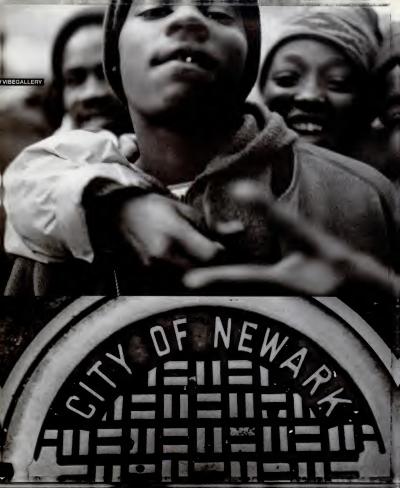
Maybe En Vogue can survive just fine without Robinson, and maybe own sell million of records too-othe her presence will be sorely missed. Of the Punky Divas, Dawn was possibly the fundiset. "I sude to have a crush on Dawn from En Vogue," A Tinbe Called Quest's Phile once rapped, and the feeling was understandable. Her voice, on sultry cust like "Civing Him Something He Can Feel," felt like the Peppermint Patty sensation of a wet to now licking the inside of vogue that the survive to the present the survive for the present the survive to the present the survive the present the survive that the present the survive the present the survive that the present the survive that the survive the present the survive that the survive the survive that the survive that the survive that the s

"This is just as much work as a performance," Terry explains, taking a break between shots. We're really tired," she says wearily, "but to get that extra En Vogue effect, we have to act excited about it."

So, after all these years, what does the name En Vogue mean to her?

"We originally wanted something that meant style, a cutting edge, with our fashion and in our style of music. As far as I'm concerned, it still means that. The name hasn't changed, and our sound has only grown. [Terry pauses.] Nothing has changed."







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United States. When discussions turn to Newark, New
Jersey, people are quick to
apply labels. But what about
the kids who call this beleaguered city home? For some
of them, it's about plastic platole, Italian lose, cemeteries,
and Redman. Witness: rebels
and survivors of the most
beautifuliest city in this world.

Duane Pyous

Photographs by Jonathan Mannion









J Pooh isn't quite sure where his name came from. "When I was a little kid, everybody called me Pooh, I was kinda short, Now I'm six foot three, six foot four," chuckles the seasoned producer. "People go, 'Pooh? Why the hell do they call you Pooh? You're this big man!" Yup, little Mark Jordan has gotten a lot larger. both literally and figuratively.

Pooh first came to prominence in the early '80s as a DJ for the famed L.A. party outfit Uncle Jam's Army. These day, he's best known for producing cross-geographical hits for hip hop's finest-from L.L. Cool J's

classic 1988 "Going Back to Cali" to Tha Dogg Pound's more recent "New York, New York," His infectious, funksoused compilation. Bad Newz Travels Fast, features the likes of Mista Grimm (who sounds far doper than he did in his "Indo Smoke" days), departure of Dr. Dre from Death Row, Threat, Tha L.A. Zuu, even Roger Troutman and the Gap Band's Charlie Wilson. Plus, there's the irrepressible Kam, whose anti-Ice Cube diatribe, "Whoop! Whoop!," is unofficially the album's first single.

"The lyrics on that are [about] something that's been going down between Kam and Cube," Pooh

shrugs good-naturedly. "I think they worked it out by now." Whatever the case. Pooh surmises: "Wherever an artist wants to go, a good producer can take that artist there " And he should know. After the dramatic Pooh was enlisted to fill-or attempt to fill-Dre's shoes.

Those days, however, appear to be over, and it's obvious that Pooh's just too busy to beef. After collecting various writing and producing credits for his well-crafted St. Ides malt liquor

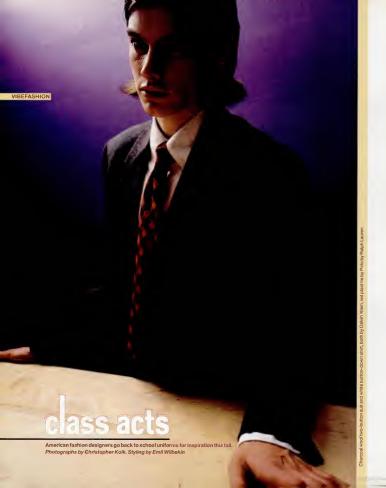
ious Friday in which he appears as the rubber-armed, no-bike-havin', goldchain-wearin' Redd. Pooh was so smitten with his forays into film that he decided to form the DJ Pooh Production and Digital Film companies.

"Right now, I'm working on a film," he says, barely shielding his excitement, "I plan to shoot it myself. It's called Two Strikes, and it's about these two guys that get out of jail. They got two strikes and they're trying not to get that third one. It's an action comedy. All kinds of stuff happen to these and Crooked I beverage commercials, guys-but I can't tell you the end of the Pooh cowrote (with Cube) 1995's hilar- movie!" Oh, pooh. Dorothy Stefanski

classic Van Exel



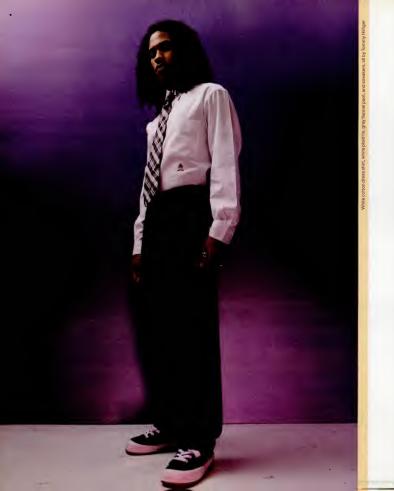
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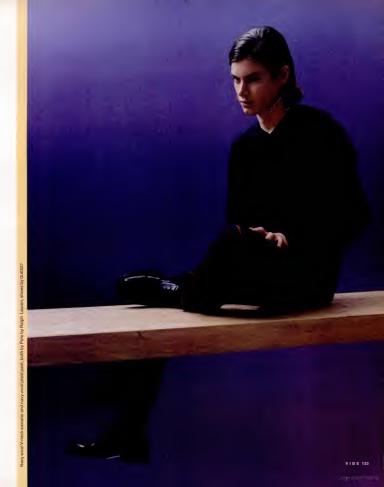






















Orange cotton T-shirt by Joe Boxer; brown V-neck thermal top by GUESS?; brown cotton drawstring cargo pant by DKNY; brown wool knit hat by Eckō Unlimited what's

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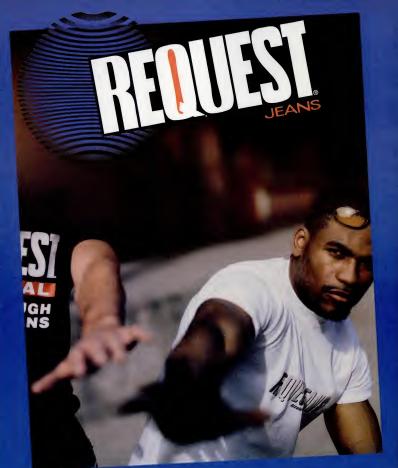
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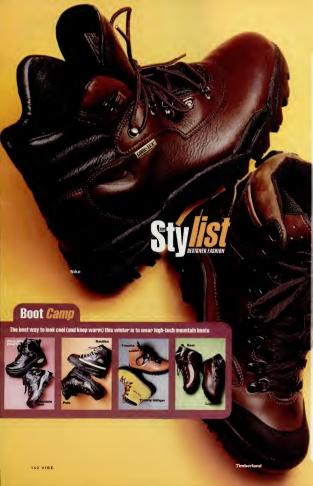
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### The Scoop

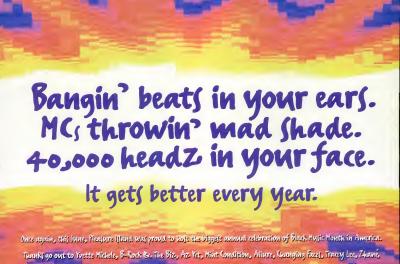
Everybody seems to be either getting into the fashion business or broadening their existing franchise. For example, Evander "the Real Meal" Holyfield has created a sportswear line called Holyfield Warrior, It's available at stores nationwide and can be ordered by phone (888-HOLYFIELD), Twenty-five percent of the profits from the T-shirt, denim shirt, and cap sales will be donated to charity....Diahann Carroll, star of Julia, A Different World, Claudine, Dynasty, and Sunset Boulevard, is coming out with her own dress, suit, and eveningwear label, available at department stores nationwide from September....Black Entertainment Television Is slated to release a fresh collection of sportswear (real clothing, not just BET logo products) this fall in a joint venture with G-III Apparel Group Ltd....In other expansion-type news, Ralph Lauren has created an extensive line of intimate apparelbriefs, boxers, T-shirts, and sports briefs for men, as well as bras, panties, satin lingene, and sport support underwear for women.CKCK It'll be in major department stores this fall .... 2(X) ist, makers of quality men's underwear, also will be debuting a collection of boxers, briefs, and shirts. The double-mercerized products, packaged In aluminum boxes, have the look and feel of silk but the support and comfort of cotton....Adidas's famous Stan Smith tennis shoe is getting a makeover. The clunky white leather sneaker with green trim now has a sleeker body. an embroidered logo near the toe, and a highly contoured sole-a more modern look....The most popular look on the streets of New York lately seems to be the Sir Benni Miles stocking cap. Not a ski cap, it's literally a stocking with the Sir Benni Miles logo around the elastic band. Emil Wilbekin



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In Hollywood, where tepid, twentysomething exces shift gears with one eye on the road and the other on weekend grosses, it's tough convincing people something new and different can also be commercial. Back in '93, when writer/director George Tillman Jr. tried to land a

also be commercial. Back in 33, when writer/director George Tillman & tried to land a deal, movie producers rejected the script for his debut, Souf Food, claiming it wouldn't appeal to urban audiences. Flime axes were boking for stories about unfeeling, ready-to-die niggaz and street life. Souf Food's key ingredients were three middle-class, married women committed to their loved ones.

"One executive was, like, 'I'm sorry, we had to turn down your film because nobody got killed,'"

recalls Tillman. "And this was a black company! I thought you just hear that kind of shit in Hollowood Shuffle."

What a difference a few years can make. Not only is Soul Food a big-studio movel (Wentleth Century Fool, it's a lace got a high-profile ecundtrack featuring a rists such as fortal and Xecape, and a cockbook (Harper Collins) with recipes from the film's stars: Vanessa Le. Williams, Wivica A. Fox, and Nia Long. The dramatic comedy, produced by Kenneth "Bablyace" Edmonds, represents an emerging trend in cinema: movies centered around the files of black women.

This year, a number of films have opened with sistas in pivotal, if not dominant, roles: Whitney Houston played a gospel singer in The Preacher's Wife; Long, an aspiring photographer in love jones, and, this winter, Jada Pinikett stars as a magnetic heartbreaker in Woo. Slated for a 1998 release are How Stelfa Got Her Groove Back; featuring Angela Bassett: Beloved, starring Opnat Winfrey; and Jackie Brown, with Pam Grier in the title role.

"The doors have opened up," says Williams, who gives a stellar performance as the career-driven attorney in Soul Food. "You just have to look at the progression from Gone With the Wind to where we are now. We can play doctors, wives. seismolosits—anvition. It's incredible."

The surge in black female-centric flicks

#### movies

#### sista acts, continued

uality, and elegance."



There have always been vehicles for black actresses, from 1954's Carmen Jones to the recent Ghost, but too often the parts were stock and isolated-the mammy, the bitch, the exotic, Now, the roles, besides being more complex, explore the previously hidden rituals of fernale bonding. In Set It Off-which grossed \$35 million domestically and is also a hit overseas-a quartet of female bank robbers show they're not afraid to cry on each other's shoulders between heists, Soul Food, meanwhile, features three feuding sisters who rise above their petty differences over money and men to keep their family traditions intact. And the upcoming Eve's Bayou offers a sensitive portrait of the relationship between an overprotective mother (Lynn Whitfield) and her two young daughters.

"These stories haven't been told," says actress/filmmaker Shervi Lee Ralph, whose in-the-works independent feature Secrets, about six girlhood friends, stars Robin Givens and Alfre Woodard. "The main thrust is women," says Ralph of her film, "But it's really about human bonding. It just happens to be from a female point of view."

Still, no one expects Columbia Pictures' torch-toting female logo to turn a darker hue or start sporting a headwrap just yet. For every interesting black female character onscreen, there are three stereotypical ones. Examples include the platinum-blond chickenhead played by Halle Berry in B.A.P.s (a sour cornedy that could have had the charm and appeal of a Clueless) or the various hoochie mamas in films like Sprung, Booty Call, and Def Jam's How to Be a Player. "Everybody can think we've come a long way," says Hollywood talent manager Dolores Robinson dryly. "But I don't really see the movie that says it vet."

According to Hollywood insiders like Debra Martin Chase, executive VP of Whitney Houston's production company, the biggest obstacle to getting better movies made is an unwavering perception that only two actresses of color are bankable; Houston and Goldberg, But that could be changing soon, Much like male stars who were brought to mainstream status with movies like New Jack City (Wesley Snipes) and Boyz N the Hood (Laurence Fishburne), actresses could get top roles in big-budget films and more star power if these "Exhale movies" succeed.

"We're really at the crossroads right now," says Chase, who is currently producing Cinderella, a TV musical extravaganza staming Houston and singer Brandy. "We're pushing the edge of the envelope and testing how far we can go."

ekhi Phifer is a natural. How else to explain a starry-eyed kid's landing a leading role in a major film with no acting experience? Especially one who shows up to the casting call with nothing but some passport pictures from Woolworth? Such is the lucky-break story of the deeply handsome, Harlem-based actor who, at 19, beat out more than a thousand other hopefuls for the role of Strike, the misunderstood drug dealer in Spike Lee's 1995 Clockers.

After less memorable roles in HBO's The Tuskegee Airmen (1995) and the comedy High School High (1996). Phifer, 22, is stepping up his game in the Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds-produced drama Soul Food. Philer delivers a poignant performance as Lem, an excon who's struggling to hold down a job and be a good husband to his wife (played by Nia Long). It's an authentic portrayal of the brother we all know-the one who means well but just can't stay out of trouble. "I really feel natural for what Lem goes through—trying to get a job, trying

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Phifer in Soul Food

food and starts a rap career murder right now."

mekhi phifer to be positive," says Phifer between bites of oxtail at a juices up soul favorite Uptown Jamaican spot. "I know a lot of people that are caught up. I tell them, You can't win. You'll end up either dead or in jail. I got three of my peoples in jail for

> Phifer credits his mother, an elementary school teacher, with "not letting the bullshit deter me." Growing up in Hariem, he always kept himself busy, playing hoops and tackling odd jobs. "I've worked since I was thirteen, sweeping the parks, making snacks for kids, handing out flyers for \$3.50 an hour," he says. These days, he spends his free time working on a soon-to-bereleased hip hop album for Warner Bros. called New York Related: The HF Project. "Harlem's Finest-that's the name of my crew." he says, "Our stuff is hard, but

Streetwise and sensitive, with a tattoo on his muscled left shoulder that says RISE. Phifer is fast becoming one of Hollywood's hot young sex symbols. "People have said that, " he says with a smile and a shrug. "I don't know. As long as I get to do what I do, then 'sex symbol' Andréa M. Duncan is cool. I can live with that."



#### movies

## dr. snakeskin's

#### master p's debut feature is the shiznit

I'm Bout It, the feature debut from New Orleans rapper/producer Master P, looks like it was shot on a roll of brittle adhesive tape. But despite the film's sneeze budget (\$1.5 million) and minimal production values, the results are street-born brilliant.

Like rapper/director lee Cube, Master Pbrings both strong storytelling skills and a solid music video background to this absorbing tale of alangin rocks and bustin's shots in the Crescent Cary. With a plot hinging on the antagonistic relationship between a corrupt cop (payed by codictered Moon Jones) and a crack kingpin trying to go logit (Master P), the film borrows elements from Superfly (dealer out to make last big core), New Jack Cip (naked drug-factory worken), and Scarface (chainsaw mutilation).



style, I'm Bout It makes you feel as if you're right there hanging out with Master P and his homies. When a character gets his head blown off, you almost believe it's real brain pulp flying across the screen. Raw, ugly, and unstylized, the violence is, however, balanced by humor. For instance. Helen Martin (from the '8os TV series 227) is a scream as the foulmouthed, blunt-smoking granny. There's also a crazy crackhead who

looks like Wesley Snipes in Moms Mabley's hand-medowns. We see him gambling with food stamps while he brags about his stable of hoze. That shit had me on the floor howling.

With a cameo from rapper Mack 10 and a soundrack that includes hardcore ballers such as Eighthalf & M/G and E-wo, 1 im Bout It achieves the status of a fleetoc classic. I rank it alongside Jimmy Gilf\*3 Jamaican outdaw fable The Hardre Trye Come. In 1932, the year Come was released, I me Bout It would have been welcomed amid the pot smoking and gumplys in the movie houses on New York's 4 and Street. Instead, as the last of these theaters dissolve into Dinney entertainment centers, I'm Bout It has to settle for the videostore the!! Tagged with the label BANNEDIN THEATERS ACROSS AMERICA. it's currently ranked as one of the Top to selllers in the country. So, be bout it and buy it.

#### the edge

tetralization of the company of the

wife stranded in the with Alaskan wilderness with two other men. Despite battling inclement weather and a bloodthirsty Kodlak bear (played ferociously by Bart the Bear), the billionaire finds that the real maneater who's after his life and wife is a fashion photographer (the ever-sexy



Alec Baldwin). Against a beautifully barren landscape, Hopkins and Baldwin duke it out with smart, witty dialogue right up until the suspenseful, one-man-standing climax. Omoronke Idowu

### bandwagon CINEPIX FILM PROPERTIES

small-town band. Dreams of fame and fortune. Band goes on the read. Road leads to self-discovery. You've seen it before. But, throw in a rural North Carolina background, a crazy, weed-dealing redneck, and a mysterious promoter and you've got Bandwagon, a refreshing comedy from director John Schultz. From the tortuned, neurotic lyricist (Lee

Holmes) and drugged-out guitarist (Kevin Corrigan) to the hot-headed bassist



(Steve Partavecchio) and hippy-dippy, chatterbox divummer [Matthew Hennessey), the characters are fun to get to know. Following this mottey crew from college radio stations to dirpy rightfubis—as they bicker over everything from hyrics to ladies—this wackly picture about what it is one on-the-road movie worth thip. Andréa M. Duncan division of the control of the c

#### fire ZEITGEIST FILMS

ontroversy? In India? Oh ves—especially when it comes to a film that portrays lesbian love. Set in New Delhi, India, Deepa Mehta's Fire stars Nandita Das as Sita, a spirited newlywed who goes to live with her adulterous husband in his brother's house. There, she befriends-and eventually seduces-her sister-inlaw Radha (Shabana Azmi). who's suffocating in a marriage that, after 15 years, has produced no children. Beautifully shot and funny at times. Fire questions the



Indian traditions that have restrained women from experimenting with their own sexuality. But in the West, where same-sex relationships are frequently explored on screen, the film will appear considerably less provocative than it wants to be. Controversy? In America? Not in this case.

Chiedo Niwocha

gravesend

Tablea External Period
This darkly humorous
debut from 22-year-old
filmmaker Salvatore Stabile
follows four dead-end teens
through one turnultuous
night in the working-class
Gravesend neighborhood



of Brooklyn, After an accidental killing leaves the fellas with a hard-to-disposeof body, they start mistrusting one another-and the corpses multiply. Stylistically indebted to Scorsese's 1973 Mean Streets, Gravesend is proudly low-budget and features a strong cast of unknowns (led by Tony Tucci, who plays the Joe Pescl-esque, trigger-happy Zane). Though the film occasionally dips into melodrama. Stabile maintains a contagious fascination for his home borough's rough terrain of paranoid drug dealers, crazed Vietnam vets, Caucasian thugs, and pissed-off parents. He represents, and celebrates, the seedy white underbelly of BK to the fullest.

Chairman Mao

# NO ONE DOES IT





21 AND UP TO OPEN IT UP

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#### they will be your father figures

hines and danza know best; hardison and mccarthy take on the world

The Queen of All Media, Oprah Winfrey, makes a foray into prime-time relevision movies this season with three dramas under the moniker Oprah Winfrey Presents. The film Before Women Had Wings takes place in the South circa 1960 and stars Lady O and Ellen Barkin. Death on Enerest is based on

lon Krakauer's book about the experiences of the survivors of the May 1006 climbing disaster, And in 1008, keep your eyes open for OWP's visually arresting production of The Wedding, a four-hour adaptation (written by occasional VIBE contributor Lisa lones) of Dorothy West's novel about the Harlem Renaissance, It stars Halle Berry,



Single Parenting, Daddy Style Pt. I: The smart, charming Greeory Hines Shoon stars Hines as a widower raising his 12-yearold son. Cosby Show-esque down to its brownstone exterior shots, Greeory Hines, which also stars Brandon Hammond (Soul Food) as the son, is a warm, funny, and intelligent look at father/son relationships....Former Today show anchor Bryant Gumbel's prime-time newsmagazine (title to be announced) will feature newsmakers and will probe deeply into investigative reports....Producer Steven Bocho and his team of writers from the hit police dramas Hill Street Rlues and NYPD Rlue continue the stories of the men in blue with Brooklyn South. (So expect some controver-

sial episodes!) Family Matters leaves ABC and joins the CBS family for its ninth season on television. You can expect hijinks from Jaleel White and co. to keep coming right into the new millennium.

#### FOX

Between Brothers marks Kadeem Hardison's return to television. He plays an uptight doctor who lives with his real estate broker/Rico Suave-player brother (Dondre Whitfield) and their two best friends: a weatherman (Kelly Perrine) and a divorcée (Tommy Davidson), Coexecutive produced by Kadeem's mom, Bethann Hardison, this ensemble comedy offers humor only one level up from your typical UPN and WB noir sitcoms....Damon Wavans steps behind the camera for are Hope St., a drama about a teen crisis center. Starring Richard Roundtree, Kelly Coffield



LAYMOND

(In Living Color), Jesse Martin (from the Broadway show Rent), and the always earnest Shan Headley, Hope mixes music video-type camera shots with some trite story lines and NY Undercover's hip, youth-oriented style.

The always hilanous Jenny McCarthy, fresh from her self-titled MTV comedy show last season, stars in another eponymous show McCarthy is outrageous as a

transplanted New Yorker who inherits a bachelorette pad in Hollywood and tries to balance a new life and job in La-La land....lce-T stars in a fast-paced. sometimes funny crime drama called Players. The show revolves around a group of street-smart convicts paroled by the FBI to help in the arrest of felons....Single Parenting, Daddy Style Pt. 11: Tony Danza returns to television in The Tony Danza Show as a single N.Y.C. sportswriter with old-fashioned values who's trying to raise two daughters in a "crazy modernized world." Wanna guess what his character's first name is? (Hint:



Single Parenting, Daddy Style Pt. 111: In The Tom Show, Roseanne's infamous exhubby Tom Arnold stars as a divorcée who returns to his Minneapolis hometown after the stormy breakup with his famous wife. (Now, why does that sound familiar?) Hmmm, as with his ex-wife's ex-show, you can expect plenty of working-class bicker-

ing. Also stars Shannon Tweed, Lisa Wilhoit, and Mika Boorem.

Set in the pressure-filled, competitive world of the L.A. record industry, HITZ is about a group of a young execs (Robert Moore and Busby Evans) who have to sign a major act in 24 hours or risk getting the boot. Are they going to stretch 24 hours over an entire TV season? Stay tuned.... Good News stars David Ramsey as a pastor who has to win over his whole

congregation after he replaces the church's founding father and is deserted by his staff. Not Amen revisited. News promises gospel flavor on the R&B tip. Clueless leaves ABC and joins the UPN family sans teachers and parents. The show's writers plan to reinvent the series completely. As if!

Omorowke Idoney



#### ghost dad

c/over, starring ernie hudson. elizabeth mcgovern, zelda harris. and loretta devine premieres september 10 on the USA network

n this earnest USA Pictures TV movie (directed by Jud Taylor), Gaten Hill (Ernie Hudson) is a widower turned ghost who is survived by his new white wife. Sara Kate (Elizabeth McGovern) Sara inherits the task of raising Gaten's daughter. Clover (Zelda Harris), and must fight for middle ground with Gaten's uppercrusty family.

Set in a present-day southern town. Clover is based on the 1991 novel by Don Sanders, It's chock-full of good intention (warm church faces) and fine performances (Hudson is lovely as the noble haunt who materializes frequently to soothe his wife's heartache and to wine away his daughter's tears). Gaten's family is portraved by a brooding supporting cast that includes Loretta Devine, Ron Canada, and Beatrice Winde. They debate in proverbs and practice southern, folky superstitions, such as leaving the front door ajar after someone dies so that their spirit can enter.

However, if it wasn't for the show's namesake-a cute Afro-puffed 11 year old-we'd sho 'nuff be snoozing in our news. Cope with the loss of her mom and with an unlikely substitute who can't even cook grits? Little Clover won't stand for it. She's hurting, and she lets everyone know it. Tantrums and all. she's the spark that keeps this worthy effort affoat long enough for a sunny. feel-good end. Ahmad Wright



# The MOVIE was awful. The RESTAURANT was packed. But you took your SUNFIRE What a GREAT night.



Newspaper said two thumbs up. Whose thumbs were they using? Our luck at the restaurant wasn't any better. Good thing we took my Pontiac" Sunfire. The air conditioning kept us cool. The standard anti-lock brakes kept us in control. We got through the traffic lookin' for another restaurant real easy because of my quick five-speed...also standard. And my Sunfire" comes with standard dual air bacs'

just in case we ran into somebody we didn't feel like running into. But as we drove around listening to music on my built-in CDP jayer., I paid a little more for that...we got to thinkin' maybe we're best off right where we are. In my Sunfire. Besides, there's always tomorrow night.

Finally, a real set of wheels you can really afford.



#### word

#### e. lynn's new world

don't have a problem with people calling me a gay write; or with people calling me a black write. But I prefer they call me a writer. To says E. Lynn Harris, at about his auteur identity and latest book, If This World Wer. Mim (Choubleday). "I don't live in an all-gay world or an all-black world," the Chicago resident says from his room in one of Donald Trump's NY.C. hotels." Try to write about the world

'I try to write about the wor that I see."



After quitting his job at IBM in the carly 80s, Harris burst onto the scene in 1991 with his smashing debut, a semi-autobiographical novel called hmisible Lift. His 1996 follow-up. Just Ast. Am, won the American Booksellers Association Blackboard List's Novel of the Year award. And

Harris's last book, 1996's And This Too Shall Pass, spent nine weeks on the New York Times Bestseller List. What's gotten audiences hooked' Harris's unique spin on the ever-fascinating topics of identity, class, intimacy, sexuality, and friendship.

Although World features an array of characters, like a gay psychiatrist who counsels casualties from the straight-sex wars and a wife/mom in a rocky marriage who gets her juices stirred by a secret cyberadmirer. Harris is still pragmatic about his subject matter. "Someone not comfortable with



homosexuality will find another character in my book they feel comfortable with to serve as a buffer."

With a possible movie deal in the work for World, as well as what promises to be a colorful memoir, E. Lynn Harris is still pledging to dig into and explore every nuance of human relationships. "I'm a romantic," says Harris, looking out at the Manhattan skyline," and I'll always with about black love." In fact, next time out, Harris says he'll flip his perspective. "The book I'm working on," he says, "scalled Abide With Me and will be written from a male heterosexual point of view." Expect E. Lynn to tell it to us straight.

ink and holes The candidly personal, arresting Images in pho-



tographer Walter Kehr's color full pain: tattoo

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•

=

(Universe) introduce peoper by which wigh skin to those who've beptized themselves forever with tattoos and piercings. The practice of marking one's skin and wearing body rings has traveled from the indigenous populations in Third World countries to the trendy shores of the United States, and Kehn has captured some of the most sincere urbane practioners of the down at the states and the states and the states are the states

color full's best pages feature photos of acquisite religious and tribe lattoos, as well as appendagelite faciliar and particular tribe and tribe and tribe faciliar and particular tribe volume la, it's obvious that Kehr tacks a multicultural working the color of the body art rainbow.

### the heart of black music

Heart & Soul: A Celebration of Black Music Style in America 1930-1975 (Stewart, Tabori & Chang) is a detailed pictorial histo-

Omoronke Idowu

ry of African-American musiclans and their style. Sampla James Brown's majestic suits complete with velvet capes and his crownlike pompadour coif. Or how about Dinah Washington's Marilynasque blond wig accentuated by diamond baubles. Using record jackets, posters, and photographs, editors Bob Martis and Davin Seav illustrate how various performers-from the zoot-suited Cab Calloway to the classic,

> Personal anecdotes from the artists'—such as Fats Waller's being kidnapped and taken to Al Capone's hideaway for three days to play music—

iazzy mien of Billie Holiday

to the slickly outfitted

Temptations-affected

global style.



spice up the text nicely.

But, disappointingly, the book glosses over the fact that many early black musicians were suplited and didn't get money or recognition for their work. Instead, Heart accentuates the positive: the positive: the prositive the ninformative, entertaining time capputs. Jesus the product of the period.

Mart & Soul a ninformative, entertaining time capputs. Jesus fox for the product of the proposities. Jesus fox for the product of the product of

#### po' white plight Jim Goad, author of The

Redneck Manifesto.
America's Scapegoats:
How We Got That Way and
Why We're Not Going to
Take It Anymore (Simon &

Schuster), recognizes that people of color have been dicked around by the Man for centuries now; but so have Goad's po' white brethren, dammit, See, although almost everyone is quick to condemn racism these days, no one seems to mind that working-class, southern Caucasians are regularly stereotyped as ignorant, inbred rednecks (check the movie Deliverance for starters).

Backed by an axtensive bibliography and personalized anacotores about with suffering, the college-educated Goad serves up a well-written, often humorous reverking of an old argument. Until we get over our presocupation with race and recorgate that our biggest problem is class division, the rich will continue to get richer and the poor will continue to get fucked.

That's all good until Goed suggests that white indentured servents had it as bad as black slaves ("for the same reason that people beat the shit out of a rent-a-car more readily than one they own") and that crackers can't really be racist, because they don't have any real power. Try telling that to someone who's had a hood-wearing lynch mob of underprivileged vokels burn a cross on his front lawn. Carter Harris





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DEN BOXING LIGHT ABSOLUT BOTTLE DESIGN AND ABSOLUT FS: 1 PHOTOGRAPHED BY STEVE BRONSTEIN.

#### tech

#### the price is right

ou say you need/want/wouldn't mind a new PC. But you're terrified of parting with all the loot you've got socked away and don't want to buy a PC at the swap meet. Whatcha gonna do? Well, rejoice! Computing on the chean is now possible. Big-



and play games!

Among the top contenders is the new Compag Presario 2200. With its sexy, charcoal-gray casing, the 2200 weighs in at \$700 plus \$299 for the matching monitor. Powered

by a 180 MHz Cyrix GX chip, this box has an 8x CD-ROM, 16MB of memory, and a 1.6 gigabyte hard drive (more than enough for most home users). A modem, basic software, and an encyclopedia are also thrown in. Compan even packed in some surprisingly good speakers. On the downside, though, there's very little room for upgrading this machine; but the 2200 is definitely worth checking.

Sure, you're thinking, but what about portables? It is true that the miniaturization of the PC affects every component but one-the price. But recently, laptop makers have reached out to those of us on limited budgets, offering decently equipped machines for between \$1,000 and \$1,800 (check that other sock).

The best way to save money is to think hard about what your computing needs are. At \$1,699, Micron's TransPort VLX gives you enough to get you started-but not much more. It sports a nice 11.3 inch monitor and 16MB RAM, and runs Windows 95 on a 1.44 gigabyte hard drive-plus it has stereo sound and touch-pad mouse control. But you'll have to cough up another \$200 for a CD-ROM and simple software, as well as \$169 for its lowest priced modem. Its excellent 5 1/2-year warranty should, however, soften the blow. So, make sure moms doesn't do the laundry before you do.

Mark Brooks (mgb@tiac.com)

#### don't test

I I hail a new (!) development on the Web: Stand-up comedian Marc Maron, who's appeared in his own HBO special as well as on I ate Night With



Conan O'Brien, presents a live online comedy show, This Is Not a Test, in conjunction with Broadway Interactive Group (RIG) and Microsoft, Broadcast live from the N.Y.C. comedy club Catch a Rising Star, This Is Not a Test features live phone-ins and real-time computer polling in which surfers can pose questions to the quest end crack wise via e-mail.

In comedy, timing is everything; in online/TV chat groups, timing is chaotic. Even with the show's pioneering use of NetShow 2.0, full-screen animation. and a custom code synchronizing its audio and visual components, technical glitches are inevitable. Should you miss an episode, however, you can browse the BIG site (http://notatest. msn.com) to review previous ones. Is This Is Not a Test funny? Well, I laughed so hard. I nearly swallowed my mouse. Chiedo Nkwocha

#### this is a modern world

The wizards at Oz (www.oz.com/-ozone) have come up with an ingenious interactive Web site. In addition to its being a tool to sell CDs (the tech nods at Atlantic Records have already signed on the dotted line), the site can be used to meet "people" at places like a record store, bar, or at a concert fea-



2

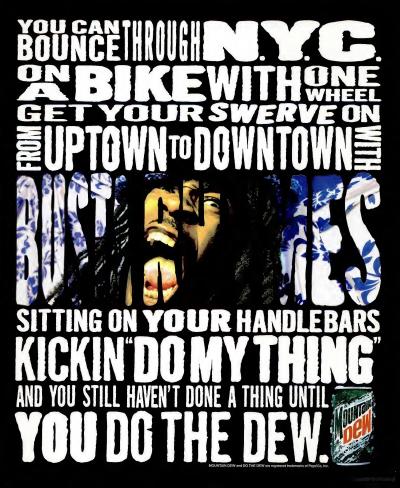
turing top-selling "artist" Kyoko Date. See, it works like this: You create an avatar, or 3D figure, in your own likeness or in the likeness of someone you'd like to be, such as Date, for example. Then, you download scenes from the Internet (the store, the bar, the concert hall). Next, call up your friends from around the world via an onscreen chat facility and arrange e virtual rendezvous.

Wherever you decide to go, you'll be able to perform real-life activities such as dancing, drinking, and getting your mack on, all in an electronic universe—saving on cab fares, the odd bar brawl, and having to deal with the real world.

#### the digital underground

pick up on this...

Shock tactic: The Auto Taser is e "revolutionary" anti-car theft device that looks like an ordinary club lock but emits e 5,900 milliwett shock to any would-be car thief who dares to test. The inventors' inspiration had something to do with car owners' wanting criminels to suffer the consequences. What next? Guns that electrocute? At least it's not fatal....The sound of music: Two of the many music sites out there that caught my eye recently: Platinum Jack and the Hub. The former (http://www.piack.com) connects aspiring hitmakers with industry pros via personalized homepages that feeture up to nine minutes of their (RealAudio, bootleg-proof) music; the latter (http://www.thehub.com) is a good-looking, underground music destination site that's not afraid to dis....Honeymoon In Vegas: Arcade games have hit the Las Vegas Strip in a big way with the arrival of the Sega/-DreamWorks/Universal Studiosdesigned GameWorks, a warehouse-size space devoted to the pursuit of digital pleesure. Viva!









on tour with BONE THUGS N HARMONY. MARY J. BLIGE, AALIYAH AND DRU HILL

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Now, with his new, imperious No Way Out, Puffy places himself at the center of the pop universe. The plays haters Puff rails against throughout the album would say that Puffy has been placing himself up front, inappropriately, for as long as he's been in the music business.

But who dictates where people should stand? Do the curious obsessions of Death Row don Marion "Suge" Kright count? What about Jeru the Damaja's recent anti-Bad Boy anthem "Ya Playin' Yaself!"? What about Puffy's eight zijlion fans? The pop-urban universe is definitely divided on

# slam it jam it

Every month you'll be able to preview songs by new artists by calling the following number and entering the number of the song you wish to preview. Then you decide if it Jams or Slams. The following month we'll post the results and offer new songs for Sorite lovers to Slam or Jam!

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212 Craig Mack
"What I Need"
Operation Get Down
Streetlife Records

Hurricane G "Somebody Else" All Woman

H.O.L.A. Recordings

214 Mia X
(featuring Master P and Fox

"The Party Don't Stop" Unlady Like No Limit Records

215

Busta Rhymes
"Put Your Hands Where
My Eyes Could See"
When Disaster Strikes
Flipmode/Elektra

AUGUST SPRITE "SLAM IT OR JAM IT RESULTS. In Its place was MOBB DEP with their jam "Hoodbum" which 428 of the listeners said Jam It. Coming in at 2nd place was DAVIN'N S"So Good" with 390 saying to Jam It response. HIGO DERMICE'S "No Guarantee" and "Vs "Bassin Street Blues" held steady at 235 and 129 respectively.



# obey your thirst.



the genre's steady march toward complete Puffy-ization.

He's so bad he's good. He's so good he's sa de He's so big we hate him. He's so clewer we love him. This post January, when Puff—edrog within him monctone partner in rhyme Mase—dropped his debut single, the infectious, mediocre "Can't Nobody Hold Me Down," he thumbed his nose at his detector as saises soared past the vomillion mark. Maybe it was the beat from Grandmaster Flash & the Furious Five's 1982 classic "The Message." Or maybe it was because Puff was telling the truth.

Ain't nothin' held him down yet. Urbane, charismatic, and passionate, Putly helped mold such as artists as Jodeci and Mary J. Blige into archetypes of ghet-to-chic and round-the-way cool. Putly was the prince who crowned Miss Mary the Queen of Hip Hop Soul. So what if Ruthless Records' Michel'le beat her to the ounch vears arailer. Putly says as os of toos.

So he addresses his artist/friend's murder first thing on No May Out, which opens with a nursi reenactment of the night that Biggle Smalls was gunned down in Los Angeles. Then comes the driving "Victory," which features Bill Com's coninous homes from the Rocky soundrised, Biggle on lead Mc, and Busta Rhymes on ke(df-tha) hook. Puff holds of till the end of the sony, when he starts yelling, "Look at Ill it sail fucked up now." The Puff personal likes to party and spend moneyon cars and gold, but when the Cristat waterfals are turned off, Puff can't help but reflect on his pain. He confesses in the lush "It! Should Die Tonight".

"Unfortunately /I've seen a lot of deaths in my life." A peek at his sou? It passes. Puffy's producers, known appropriately as the Hitmen, nabbed commercial songs that club Dis were spinning back in the early 1980s. In a move some have taken to calling hip hop, karaoke, Puffy's crew lifted/looped/sampled classics by the Police, David Bowie, and Diana Ross and recontextualized them for a new generation. Asong about a stately (1981s" Every Breath You Take) is flipped

Say what you like, these tracks are soulful and charming. Plus, like Zapp, Puff his voice a gentle nudge over rough, familiar beats—can make you dance.

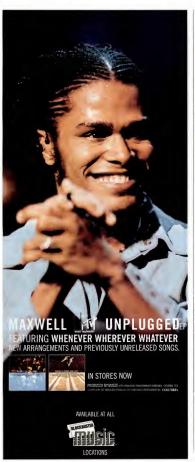
for the overwrought, three million-selling Biggle tribute (featuring Faith and 112), "Till Be Missing You." Ross's 1975 "Theme From Mahogawing Dov Unknow Where You're Going To," is transformed into a meditation on the bugged, sometimes suicidal thoughts of a high roller. Say what you like, these tracks are soulful and charming; they were excellent the first time around. Plus, like Zapp, Puff—his voice a gentle rudge over rough, familiar bests—can make you dance.

But the album isn't just full of yummy Puff pieces. In the hype Big Willie ode Young of s.", (fleaturing Biggie, and in which Jay-Zoracks, "Cause! Neeps it pleto! Like surflower seeds. / And quarter waters") the Notorious One promises, "my going to take it back to the gutter for you multifuckuls." On his way he should draig out filler like! "Don't Stoy Mart You're Don'g and "Selontary vou can hear the tears in Puff's voice on the Bone Thuggy "Is This the End?" Puff and Foxy Brown flip sweet tverses in "Friend." Puff's gaming the whole time, an inch away from nasty.

Like the Motown, Stax, and Philipy International production crews, the Bad Soy clique have their eyes on the Billboard charts and their ears on the booming systems that roar down 125th Street after 1 a.m. With names like Deric "Ddort" Angelettie (who produced the superior mix-tape favorite "It's All About the Berjalmins"), Stevies J., Nashiem Myrick, and fon "Amen-Ra" Lawrence, these cats create fierce, moody sonic manipulations that are changing the soundscapes of pop music. The music is good. To paraphrase his boys the Lox (and Chill Rob G and Snepl and He-Man) Puff Daddy and the Family have the power. Indeed. Of a sort.



OBEY YOUR THIRST SPRITE





# EARTH, WIND & FIRE 'IN THE NAME OF LOVE' PYRAMID RECORDS

After meandering in the barren, uninspired music desert of their past four albums (which spanned a period of 14 years), Earth, Wind & Fire have finally figured out the secret behind how a legendary group 18py legendary: Don't abandon your classic sound to conform to what's in. This is not to say that their new disc, In the Name of

Love—the group's 21st release—is a retro nostalgic throwback to their heyday in the 1970s and '80s. It's a contemporary, '90s-style record, but one that sounds like EWF. Finally!

That sound, in case you forgat, is the mile high, multilayered timber of rich, textured harmonies, exotic instrumental interfudes, and upfiring lyvice fleshed outry blanner White? booming tenor and Philip Bailey's angelic falsetto. Verdime White always could knock fire from his bass; his thumping grooves, intervined with a hollering brom section, set the foundations for EWFs statist music treats. And no other group can duplicate their sunny,

Saturday-afternoon ballads.
Songs like "Revolution," "Rock It,"
ance-loos and the album's title track are sure-fire
dance-floor anthems, while the stace-inthe state is being a sure brilling to the strace hastime to the state of the strace hastime from antic low. The album's

\$10.00 a. Sulky, celestual ballads. "When Love

Goes Wrong, "Cruising," and "Right Time"-are among the group's finest work, on a par with their dreamy, emotive masterpiece, 1975's Reasons." We're talking slow aims that will hook the next generation of EWF fanatics. Just be sure to put the champagne on ice.

In the Name of Love is like revisiting

a fresh yet familiar face, one that soothes, satisfies, and makes you smile from the inside out. Damn, it's good to have the natural elements in order again. Omoronke Idown

croon. A voice that inspired vocal auteurs satis like David Bowie, the Divine Comedy, and David Sylvian, Scott Walker's baritone is unautimely rich with romantic melancholy. Mesmerizing. George Pitts

Mesmerizing.

the wait.

SCOTT WALKER'TI

Like a medieval monk at a surreal auction staged somewhere between heav-

en end Earth, '60s legend Scott Weiker

chants, "Do i hear twenty-one / twenty-

from "Farmer in the City" eerily mark the Ohio-born singer's return. His first ei-

bum in 11 years, Tilt is meture, eccentric, and rigorously beautiful.

This song collection is well worth

On most of Titt. Walker deliber-

ately short circuits the awesome vir-

tuosity of his voice (which calls to mind

Frank Sinetra's interpretive powers) by singing in a cooler, more neutral style.

Coproduced by Peter Weish, whose er-

rangements mesh with the dry, globel

slant of Welker's halkulike lyrics, Tilt

scores with cuts like "Patriot (A Single),"

in which Walker uncorks his signature

one / twenty-one?" These opening lyrics

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#### VANESSA WILLIAMS 'NEXT' MERCURY RECORDS

Vanessa Williams, hardly a stranger to adversity, Is at a crossroads once again. On her fourth album, the sultry singer/actor carries listeners on the long journey that is her struggle to accept a failed marriage. It is certainly from within that private, painful chamber of emotion that Williams offers Nets.

iams offers Next.
On this simple, 12-cut album, there are exactly two
themes that Williams develops. One, accepting a local love.
And two, learning to love again.
As usual, she entrusts the
songwriting to others, including R. Kelly, Dany's limmons,
and Seidah Garrett. However,
the raw manner in which she
belts out songs like "Who
were Vot Thinkin" Bout?" and
"Lost Without You'r indicatesth
inspire Next' Shirt coordants.



"Lost Without You" indicates that Williams's turnultuous personal life did indeed

"For the second time around /!" Ido much more / I refuse to let life end /!" you have joick up the pieces and start again," she affirms in "Start Again," a mellow, heartfelt balled written and produced by R. Kelly.

As with Villiams's past three albums, Next Includes a variety of music formats, dipping in and out of R88, adult contembers of the opportunity to sing straight from the soul. For example, a track such as Add If Ever, "roduced by Jimmy, Jean and Terry Lewis, seems to cinsubstantial to showcase Williams's enormous talent. In contrast, "First Thing on Your Mind," a passionate piece about the exploration of new love, sounds more like the petite powerhouse we know: inviting, assured, and says."

Ultimately, Next is a pick-and-choose album that gives us a small window into Williams's ever-changing world—the highs, the lows, and everything in between.

Kierna Mayo

## BRIGETTE MCWILLIAMS 'TOO MUCH WOMAN' VIRGIN RECORDS



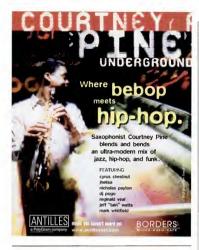
Abandoning the hip hop flavor of her eponymous 1994debut, Brigette McWilliams is about classic R&B on her new, excellent Too Much Woman. Producer Steve Harvey (not the television star) provides silky old-school instrumentation for "Actions." flush

funk for the Ohio Players-influenced "Fire," and delicate acoustics for "Through It All," which is buried at the disc's end.

Those who enjoyed "Baby Don't Play Me" and "(Don't Let Me Catch You)
Slippin "from the defiant Brigette Mc Williams will cheer the Chaka Khan-inspired
tile track as well as the smoky retro rocker "Better Off Without You." Too Much
Woman is a worthy collection. There's no waiting to exhale here. Judow Külpatrick

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# **BOOM SHOTS**

Spice Gill. Smalley-face doubing. Clorted cream. England's come up with some dubious cultural countributions over the years—but none more consistently maligned than the enormously successful international regage top or nesemble URsp. (For the hardcore massive who are too cool to continue reading, let the ressure you." The best new Oll 2 by the hard is Wicky Wacky, and the arist not to sleep on for '97-'98 has got to be Sizzla. Now, will you listen!

This is where I cast avoic in defense of the lads from Birmingham,

This is where I cast a vote in defense of the lads from Birmingham, England, not that I haven't gritted my teeth through many a URgo chart topper (their topser (their topser) (their tops

Their 1983 album Labour of Love was some sort of catalyst that whet my curi-

ously strong appetite for excessive amounts of regage vinyl. Even as I ventured off in search of obscure Leroy Smart singles, I was feeling the UBs. Histened to their great concert album (1982's With Europe, URpe, Line) over and over. I putchased the tare hologram cover of the tare hologram cover of the total hologram cover of the total hologram cover of the company of the control of the control of the cover of the decord, 1982's UBgs. I lost my mind more than once during Astro's chant once during Astro's chant of the cover of the c



there a 12-step plan for me? Hello, my name is Rob, and I am a UB40 fan.

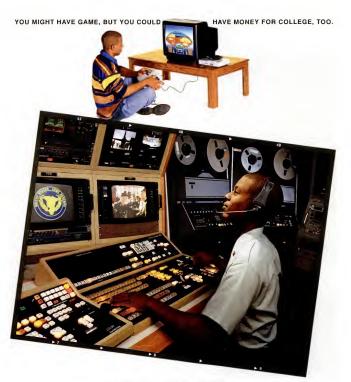
Still, I defend them. Like other early '80s British purveyors of the crooked

Sun, I defent unter have once any so Bitting purey to the cooking regge or increasing its popularity, depending on how jaundiced a view you have. But before you lump them in with Ace of Base, consider these facts. With their 16th album. Guns in the Ghetto (Virgin).

—second only to Bob Marley himself in the reggae market. The new album was seconded at Nuff Studios, which the band recently set up in Jamaica (in other words, they're giving back). Among their future projects is a remix version of Goss in the Chierto that will feature danchall champions such as Beenic Man, Lady Saw, Mad Ochos, Ninig Man, and Anthony B. And although Goss may not burn up the danchall circuit, its mounful diel next is a piece of consoirs reasoning that's righton time. Plus, "Oracabes sa Moonshine" is one of the most romantic songs! I've heard in a lone while.

But the playa hating continues. Ever since their cover of Tony Tibles's "Red Red Wine" (itself a cover of Neil Diamond's cover of a Salvation Army temperance anthem) became an accidental smash hir in the U.S., true UB fish have had to stand in line behind low-struck pubescent girls swooning over the boyish charm of from than All Camboline.

I liked Ali too, with his achingly weet woals and that spooly shing harmonything he had going on with his brother, Robin. But I didn't have a canh on UB<sub>00</sub>; I just dug their music. They sung about racism and the criminal justice system. They dubbed without apology. They named their band for the British Unemployment Benefits form. That's some real shit right theer—just 18c ODS's album with the Good-stump cover art. But then, of course, Ali and Chinsie Hynde did do a Somy K Ober tune. Oh, well. So much for street call.

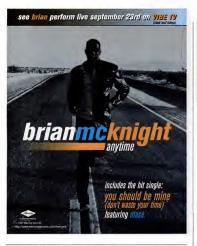


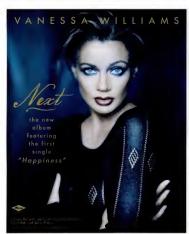
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# Yukmouth, Knumskull

### LUNIZ'LUNITIK MUSIK'

The Bay Area bad boys, whose 1995 platinum-selling "I Got 5 on It" was the anthem for thrifty weed heads everywhere, are back with *Lunlilik Muzik*, their funkdaffed, guestladen sophomore album. Artists like E-40, Raphael Saadiq, and Too Short leave lasting impressions while "Vukmouth and

Knumskull twist familiar themes (Boogie Down Production's 1988 "Jimmy" becomes "Phillies," Ready for the World's 1985 "Digital Display" gets an update) in their particular, off-kilfer fashion.



Lunitik Muzik-gratuitous references to drugs notwithstand-

ing—is an enjoyable collection of music, equally amusing and artistic. The Luniz understand (even on the semiominous "Thugz Die") that even in the often too-serious hip hop arena, it's still okay to have fun. Hannibal Tabu

#### THE ALKAHOLIKS 'LIKWIDATION' LOUD/RCA



What makes a motherfucker so damn fresh? That's the rhetorical question posed by the Alkaholiks on their glorious 1995 single "The Next Level." In the case of Los Angeles's original insane clown posse, one needed only the briefest taste of the 'Liks' potent hip hop elixir to get the answer. Characterized by the fluid exchanges of MCs Tash and J-Ro, and the Eastside-friendly production acumen of boardsman E-Swift, the group's sparkling debut, 21 @ Over, and its equally intoxicating sophomore effort, Coast II Coast, were skill-heavy fresh-fests whose buoyancy and humor invited onlookers to join in the revelry with-

out betraving the group's underground roots.

Likwaidanos finds the drunken masters still enjoying the fivolity of their Likwis (sin "flowini file...) aesthetic. Over the charming, but used aylophone chords of "Killin (ft.-]-Ro articultes the LP's entertaining agenda in no uncertain terms: "My mind craves the knowledge / My pockets crave the ceah / My mouth craves the brow / And my johnson craves the ass." Flash Gordon-type space effects and the moog bass from Sevie Wonder's 1973 "Too High" set the stage for the festive call-andersponse holosin "All Night." And the sublime" High Plop Dunkies, "featuring Wi-Tang's immitable Of Dirty Bastard, is an up-tempo adrenaline rusher punctuated by stacetop pion as the set.

Unfortunately, rap's recent penchant for champagne-sipping penthouse players has caused the first to make a few concessions to commercial interests. Though the properties of the properties of

Butas Tore Down" displays, these lovable hubes are still more than capable of craatively recapturing old school energy without resorting to foolish trends: With E-Swift's adroit rhythmic reworking of the Wild Spid theme click-clacking behind him, Tash brags, "My Ally style of rhyming is abead of its time / I make words connect lovely like Corons and limes." If I didnik to that.

Well, the summer is finally at an end, and you know what's coming: eternities at the bus stop and self-inflicted ass kickings on the regular because you still don't have a car. And believe you me, I know what it feels like to stand there and watch them cats roll up to the stoplight looking all warm and comfortable in their rides while you keep checking the cold and spiteful road for your late bus to come. That's why I've gathered a couple of underground flavors for your Walkman to help ease the sting of chilly winds that may slice through vour bubble 200se.

Func June are a group from Riverside, California who don't let their quest to have fun compromise the quality of their content. What sets Dr. Stank and Funcsta Func apart from the competition is their ability to take old-school techniques (like rockin' the crowd, call and response, and catchy chants) and flip them without sounding outdated. Their first song, "Make It Bump," starts the party with a remarkable contortion of the classic beat from Johnny "Guitar" Watson's "Superman Lover," They then trade easyto-digest lyric patterns, as on the pungent "Boogie": "The microphone fiend

will bring the ruckus and the drama / I keep shit on point, plus I'm fucking with your baby mama." The shiner track, however, is "Untouchable, Unfadeable," in which the two "rape the industry for what it's worth / And do a Will Smith "

At the beginning of their five-song demo tape, the rhyme patterns don't vary much, and it seems as if their style may become monotonous. But with tons of energy and skill, Func Junc keep a grip on your ear like Tyson. The rest of the demo continues with the same party-hearty mixture of well-produced beats by Stank and cranial jewels by Funcsta. It's now up to an interested and dedicated label to blow them up. Call Bobbito Morrow at Sugar III Management



(000-784-8035) and light the fuse. Remember when all the hip hop coming out of the

South seemed to be nothing but booty-bouncing bass drums over breakbeat records? Chetto Mafia prove that there are other groups from Georgia besides the talented OutKast and Goodie MOb; Decatur natives Wicked and Nino got together in the lab and came up with a straight grits-and-butter track called "For the Good Times (Straight From the Dec)." Okay, okay, so their name makes you think of a five-

minute shoot-out over the sound of chalk screeching on a blackboard. Fear not. I assure you that this is something to check for.

Sampling Al Green's 1967 "For the Good Times," Ghetto Mafia create a bluesy sittin'-on-the-porch ditty that explains the elements of the southern thug mentality. What's really clever about "For the Good Times" is its flow, which is comprised of a bunch of short phrases that clearly bring across the main idea. For example, when Nino flips "Real G / Feel good / Smoke good / Drink good / More cash / New car / New crib / Same 'hood," you gots no choice but to nod and admit that shit was kind of slick. The album, Straight From the Dec, should be in stores right now, but if you have any problems finding these dirty Southerners, call up Down South Entertainment/Fully Loaded Records at 310-586-6464.



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"Tell It Like It Is" 1), "Tighten Up" (Vol. 2), and "A Brand New Bag" (Vol. 3). Each of these titles has at least 14 #1 R&B hits and several "should have beens". So in addition to checking out classics from soul legends like James Brown, The Dells, Jerry Butler, Jackie Wilson and so on, you also get a fine sampling of tracks that didn't quite make it to the big time. Take Bessie Banks for example. She made the original of "Go Now" only to see The Moody Blues take it to #1. And Aretha's underrated sister Erma, who saw Janis Joplin cover her original of "Piece Of My Heart". Each of these is a great way to delve into the '60s - and at







Funkgasm is exactly that. An aural orgasm of funky delights starting with Sly in 70 to The Gap Band in 86. 15 classics from form Browne, Slave, Bootsy, Raydio, Sun, EWF, Cameo, O'Jays and more. 75 minutes plus of booty-shakin' mayhem, plus a cool essay from Scott Galloway.

the same time impress your parents!

\*(Before Rap)



#### IMMATURE THE JOURNEY

Teenyboppers have been going crazy over Immature since their 1991 debut, On Our Worst Behavior. Even now, with their new album, The



Journey, puppy love-laden cuts like "I Can't Wait" and "Extra, Extra" will have you fashion-flashing back to the bronze-buttoned jackets New Edition rocked in '85.

But don't be footed. Although Batman, Romeo, and LDB are all still under 17, their vocal development is evident in beautiful songs like "Where Do We Go." The boys sound vilvine when they trade in their sugar-sweet falsettes for clenched-daphragm crooning. A pleasurable pligrimage overall, immature's Journey is one of young-adult love—and the loss of innocence that comes with it.



#### USHER 'MY WAY' LAFACE RECORDS

Although Usher Raymond's self-titled 1994 debut could have been filed between Rav Jand Jason Weaver in Tower Records' "mediocre teen singer" section, the 18 year old's new album, My Way, is one of this fall's unexpected treasures. Written and produced by the all-star triumvirate of Babyface, Teddy Riley. and Jermaine Dupri, the album's tasteful lyrics let Usher get fluid and passionate without embarrassing him with crass invitations to bone. I mean, "I'm fuckin' you tonight" sounds fine coming from a full-grown guy like R. Kelly-but who wants down and dirty sex talk from a teen? With a gentle tone and a

With a gentle tone and a courty vocabulary. Uber For "Bedtime," the Grammy-wirning Babylace creates a supple arrangement that works as a metapher for the evolution of along, meaningful relationship. And

that works as a metaphor for the evolution of a long, meaningful relationship. And the usually Tabasco-longued Lift film gets with Libber's program: She turns down her heat abit and provides a dash of hip hop to the subtly spicy "Just Like Me." Even when riding Dupri's waves of waterbed sonics on "Nice and Slow," Usher comes of like a caring Casanova—one who! It still be lying next to you when you wake up in the morning, unless he's downstairs already, love Jones style, scrambling eggs and pouring coffee.

Usher succeeds with My Way by accenting the mystery of sex. His youthful sensuality is implied; it's never—ahern—rammed down our throats. Usher leaves a little something to his listeners' imaginations, trusting that an emotionally mature audience can reach their own conclusions. And—think you your yout—their own orgasms.

#### SWV 'RELEASE SOMETENSION' RCA

After selling two million copies of their ingenuous debut, It's About Time, and following it up with last year's platinum New Beginning, the ladies of SWN have thrown down the gauntlet again. Now, they're whipping all competition with Release Some Tension, their cohesive third offering and strongest set yet.







Like TLC's monstrously successful Crazy-Soxy-Cool, SWY's Release Some Tensor pleases because It distills the pirt's prenium qualities. Rather than employ a luscious Michael Jackson sample (as they did on their popular 1938 "Right HererHuman Nature" renid), thetho, instead, surp the wignia-pop pleasure that permeated Jackson's entire Off the Walf album. They especially shire on "Rain", a balled written and produced by longitime contribution of firsh Alexander Margian. a balled written and produced by longitime contribution of firsh Alexander Margia. No "When LOV," a slow jam classic in the making, takes SW ween high-

passion and probity,
they sing, "When you
cry / Baby I cry / And if
you take your love away
// Illiust die." making you be-

lieve every word.

As "When U Cry," "Lose My Cool," and the kicky, Missy Elliott-peon," and the kicky, Missy Elliott-peon," and the kicky, Missy Elliott-peon, and the kicky, Missy Elliott-peon, and the kicky succeed when they make the Elliott feel like it sail about them. Throughout Release Some Tension, they sure hare nate aggressive-submissive sentimets more than Mike Tyson Gild dung this marriage to Robin Gilvens. Or, Taj, and Luke known how to make the guys feel in control, all the whise throwing a sly wink at the females who rule relationships with an iron fist in a velvet dions.

Even if two thirds of helease didn't host guest appearances from hip hop's finest (Lil' Kim, Foxy Brown—who rips the title track—Redman, et al, this album could seduce for with the simple power of the groove. With grace and style, SWV continue their signature motif of sailing on pure, premillennial pop, squarely cast in the motiod of '90s-914/e R88.

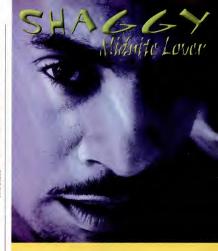
Miles Marshall Lewis

#### ITRU'NEW BREED OF FEMALE'



Il Tu are a new girl duot, they 're down with Bone Thuge. N° Harmony, They stay busy-smokin' and lyrically atomp-in' plays hatas over lazy beats on their debut, N'ew Bread Fromale. Brins and Jhaz stutter, spew, and harmonize in rune Bone style, but they're so caught up trying to show the brothers that "women can lick it too," they fail to separate themselves from other so-called gangtas rhymestresses. Generic songs like "Balters Flossin" and the hethy" "Two Hist and Pass" prove that Il Tru are new, but not a new breed.

VIBE 171



#### MR. BOOMBASTIC IS BACK WITH HIS DYNAMIC NEW ALBUM MIDNITE LOVER

featuring "Piece Of My Heart," the follow-up to the platinum album BOOMBASTIC. In stores now.



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#### LEE "SCRATCH" PERRY 'ARKOLOGY' ISLAND JAMAICA

#### 



To make a long story short, Lee "Scratch" Perry, the 61-year-old shaman who still makes jungle records with the Mad Professor, is the most prescient producer-and, perhaps. artist-ever to emerge from Jamaica. Island's three-CD, 52-track retrospective, though long overdue, more than makes up for the wait with weight enough to crush even the heaviest Scratch watchers. There are 10 extended mixes, six alternate takes, two previously unreleased gems, and the clean Island versions of Perry's classic tunes "Dub Revolution," "Soul Fire," and "Roast Fish + Combread."

ry was Island's star producer, the mastermind behind such worldwide hits as Max Romeo's "War ina Babylon" and Junior Marvin's "Police and Thieves," the latter of which the Clash would later cover. That led Perry and Bob Marley to write "Punky Reggae

Party, "which, in turn, led the Clash to ask Parry to produce their 1979 crocker "Complete Control." Like I said, it's a long story; one that's impaccably chronicled in Arkology's liner notes. The gist of it is that Parry eventually fell out with Island CEO Chris Blackwell after Blackwell balked at releasing some of Parry's more ambitious projects, including his 1978 sock effort. Fish" and the dazzling Heart of the Congos. Embittered, broke, and (some say) bonkers, Parry put out the records himself, but only after adding desperate overclube and burying the masters in his backyra. Meanwhile, the majes-

tic minimalist mixes of the most cherished music he'd made for international consumption lanquished in Island's yaults.

Now, for the first time, Perry can be heard in his prime at the controls of his magic four-track Black Ark home studio, conjuring up swirting Merlin mixes and coaxing over-the-hill veterans and young unknowns allike into career performances. Indeed,



20 different artists are featured here, not to mention Perry himself, a lyricist/vocalist nonparell.

The only ingredient missing is Perny's favorite purpli and partner, Bob Marley, whose Dreams of Freedom is an ambient translation in dub by Bill Laswell that will neither appeal nor enthrall purists; although it might be a pleasant way for someone who's afraid of reggae to wade into it. For those brazen enough to dive headfirst into the sargasso sea that is Jarnaican music, however, there's on better quide than that fishiest of all Pisces, Lee 'Sortah' Perny, Bob Mack



## VARIOUS ARTISTS 'CUBA: I AM TIME'

From Desi Amaz's "Babalu-Aye" chants on the ILove Lugy theme to the clave beast in Junior M.A.E.I.A.'s recent "Player's Anthem," Cuban music has been a powerful inunderrecognized force in shaping American sounds. Cubat: I Am Time-named for the mix of European, American, and African influences that have resulted in the island's complex music rhythms—is a pleasing and diverse collection of recent, reissued, and are recordings from both Cuban and American labels.

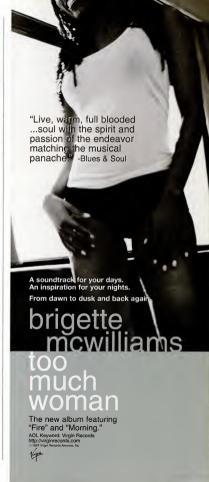
The sy-track boxed set is compnised of four CDs, each with a different theme, and is completed by a detailed uz-page booklet. "Cuban Invocations" deals with West African conga beats and religious songs ranging from Clave Y Guaguancó's "La Voz del Congo" to "Santa Barbara ((Que Viva Changól)" by Celina Gonzalez, a song dedicated to the African god and given voice by the expatriate salsa queen Celia Cruz.

The disc tilled 'Cantar en Cuba' focuse on the singer and the song, Highlights include Joseito Femandez's famous shouted out to a Cuban beauty, 'Gusjin Guantanamera,' and Mercedius Valdet's haunting ballad 'Drume Negrita.' The disc called 'Ballar on Cuba' deals with innovators of rhythm and dance, specifically the blind composer/instrumentalist Arsenio Rodriguez. His diablo reconfigurations of Compolere music forms in 'Advirsalo' exte testage for the legendary bassist Israel 'Cachoa' (Jopez, inventor of the descarge (Cuban 'jam session'). Lopez and his pianist brother Crestes are also responsible for the transformation of Euroscae Auszenia from Asticianized mambo heard

Finally, "Cubano Jazz" spottights composer/bandleader Maio Bazza's 1940 Tanga-the first mix of bebop and mambo. The "jou supergroup Irsker's "Juana Mil Ciento" features mercurial Weather Report-like synthesized syncopations. The influences of American keyboard aristis McCoy Tyner and Keith Jarrett are heard in the prouplusive, poetic paintims of Emiliano Subodos's "Neuev Stion" and Gonzalo Rubalcaþa's fleet-fingered remake of "Woody "N You." The presence of Dizzy Gillespie-who popularized Afrio-Cuban jazz in the U.S.—shows through in the braved borsaw work of Jesus Mennay in "Tumbao de Coqueta."

on "Sociedad Antonio Maceo." It's all here.

Shaped like a cigar box, Cuba: I Am Time is a festive, well-sequenced, and danceable set that shows off that nation's most important cultural export. Until the embargo lifts, it's the next best thing to being there. Eugene Holley Ir.



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#### SEAGRAM 'SOULS ON ICE' NOTRYBE/VIRGIN



Before his violent death this past July, East Oakland's Seagram left Souls on Ice as his final testament. The rapper's passion for his music is clear, but unfortunately, the album doesn't display the innovation or progression to match it. Although low-register bass licks and synth sounds work well with Seagram's gangsta imagery, the substandard beats from Cali producers Mike Dean. Terry-T, and Tone Canone leave a lot to be desired.

To the Seag's credit, though, he did try to dispel the myths about street hustlin' without glorifying its horrors. Hopefully, some of us will learn from

the painful poetry of yet another life cut way too short. Carlos Nino

#### **ROYAL FLUSH 'GHETTO** MILLIONAIRE



D BE YOUR-Y RELATIVITY Hip hop heads may remem-

ber producer/MC No I.D. from the walk-wit'-a-bop joint "The Real Weight" (featuring Dug Infinite) that laced Relativity's 1996 Urban Assault compilation. On his full-length debut, Accept Your Own and Be Yourself (The Black Album), I.D.

NO L.D. 'ACCEPT

and Infinite demonstrate potential on songs like "Fate or Destiny" and "Mega Live (That's the Joint)" featuring Syndicate. But Chitown tiger Common shines so hard on "State to State." you have to squint to see anything else. Yep, No I.D. and his close-knit rap fam have put together a collection of songs stout in production but light

on the lyric hot sauce.

The Blackspot

He's the kid from Flushing. Queens who blew up on Mic Geronimo's "The Natural." Now, Royal Flush is representing self-a-delphia with his own joint, 510 % Ghetto Millionaire

The album, which features cameos from Noreaga, the Wastelanz, and of course, Mic Geronimo, is filled with tight lyric flows and heavy bass lines. It's also thick with R&B undertones: Listen for lifts of "Don't Fly, It's Faggy," by Quincy Iones. Roy Avers's overused "Everybody Loves the Sunshine," and the reworking of Force M.D.'s' gem "Love Is a House" for RF's "Can't Help It " With first-rate recipes by gourmet producers

Buckwild, L.E.S., and Da Beatminers, among others, plus potent ingredients like the cuts "Iced Down Medallions" and "Worldwide," Ghetto Millionaire shakes and bakes into one of the more flavorful entrees on hip hop's overflowing dinner table. C.D. Frazier







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## ALBUM IN-STORES IN **OCTOBER**

Executive Producers: Violet Brown & Andrew Shack

PRIORITY

#### LAYLAW THE LAWHOUSE EXPERIENCE VOLLIME ONE STREET LIFE JAWHOUSE RECORDS

It's difficult to make a compilation album flow with melodious continuity, but that didn't deter Los Angeles producer Laylaw, who steps up to the plate with The Lawbouse Experience, Volume One,

Track for track, Laylaw sticks to his tried-and-true (if not dated) formula of thickas-molasses beats with snappy drums and bottomy bass riffs. And it works-most of the time. Just ask wicked-ass Ras Kass, who sets it off bank robbery style in "Arch

earthy, elastic "I Just Wanna Play."

Truly, truly hypnotizing.

Angels" with the Likwit crew's Xzibit. Ras paints L.A. as the "home to niggas with Gold Visas and heaters / Sending Jesus subpoenas / Got you singing duets with Selena, nigga / So, sista, act, 'cause Black Nun get love /and I'ma have juice 'til Mark Fuhrman plant the bloody glove." He's a tough act to follow, so feel free to recuperate during W.C.'s nonsensical "Give It Up.

For "Your Hustle Ain't On," West Coast rap daddy Ice-T finds

ain't my fault, G." But lesser knowns like Go Mack, in his savory "One Way In," get twice as nice. Maybe it's the song's soulful thump and jingle, or maybe it's Mack's E-40-on-sherm flow, but there's something hypnotic in the hook, "The game is like a pussy, no doubt / One way in and one way out." Northern Cali gets represented via the Luniz and Dru Down, even Memphis gets love courtesy of Eightball & MJG. Eventually, though, all these playalistic pursuits start to sound alike, creating barrages of redundant melodrama. The Pharcyde interrupt the monotony, though, with the gangsta parody, "Westcyde 242." And, if that isn't enough, soul-

a lively refrain in "I ain't hatin' you, why you hatin' me? / You're hustle ain't on, it

ster L.V. puts it down as the Experience winds up, freaking it with his Overall, Laylaw's experimental Experience may fill you up, but it still leaves you strangely unsatisfied. Be warned: Instead of making you say "Ho!," it may have you muttering, "Ho, hum." Malik Singleton

#### ERATES

#### **OUR CURRENT OFFICE SOUNDTRACK** (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER)

MISSY "MISDEMEANOR" ELLIOTT-Supa Dupa Fly.

OASIS-D'You Know What I Mean? Brits still kick. RAKIM-"It's Been a Long Time." Worth the wait. WU-TANG CLAN-"Reunited." Loving it daily.

RUFUS FEATURING CHAKA KHAN-Rufusized. She's the queen.

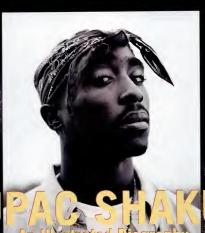
WYCLEF JEAN-Wyclef Jean Presents the Carnival. AMBERSUNSHOWER-Walter T. Smith. Soothing soul food.

NANCY SINATRA-Greatest Hits. Saucy, silly fun. MIKE LADD-Easy Listening for Armageddon. Freakin' the funk.

BLACK SABBATH-Paranoid. Incredible devil music.

# BOOK. THE LIFE. E LAST WORD

ampiled by the editors WIEE this is the definitive biography of this generation's most micoversial hip-hop tist, from his childhood as the son of a former Black Panther and his explosive arrival on the hip-hop scene, to his highly publicized rivalries and arrests and his violent death at age 25.



TUPAC SHAKUR more than 125 tu exclusive photogra from VIBE's archev a foreword by Quine Jones, an introduction by Danvel Smith, and a wealth of never-beforepublished material. including memorial tributes from John Singleton and Ernest Dickerson and the text from a complete on-line interview with Tupac.

TU JR

By the Editors of VIBE Magazine Foreword by Quincy Jones

May Tupac Shakur rest in peace, aut may the rest of us live in it.

ERYWHERE

#### 1. Janet Jackson and Q-Tip (and Joni Mitchell) together on her new single, "Got Till It's Gone"—Is it poetic justice, or what?

2. How many 'Liks does it take to get to the center of the rap world? 3. In other

Alkaholiks get their long-overdue props?

4. You think the Wu-Tang Clan will ever add a

Wu-woman (who can actually sing) to their roster? 5. Isn't Maxwell's new

8. Where can guys sign up to be WNBA groupies? 9. JoJo and his brother's Love

Almays is divine, but is it because K-Ci
gives us mucho Al Greenisms in the
lice Krissylls 105Als
the Krissylls 105Als
we can't wait for him
to go completely solo?

e Liks: Tash, Ro,E-Swift,

10. How can folks be shocked that Mike Tyson

ICE KRISPIES TREATS

Al Roker says, "Here's what's going on in your neck of the woods"? 18. After Puffy and Savion's face off in the

"All About the Benjamins" video, is Puffy now the Fred Astaire of hip hop? 19. Isn't

that you who turns



fly? 6. Is it because we all read Lois Duncan's I Know What You Did Last Summer when we were shorties that we can't wait for the movie (starring Freddie Prinze Jr.)? 7. Miss Erykah Badu

Jr.)? 7. Miss Erykah Bad loves her green leather coat,

doesn't

went bananas on
Evander Holyfield—
weren't they fighting on a giant St.
Ides logo? 11. Can't

you really, truly, get your groove on to Jakaranda's new "Everynight, Everyday"? 12. We're not mad at that Suga Ray/Super Cat song "Fly." but why doesn't Cat save his best hooks for his own cuts? 13. Who are the ill people buying Coolio's "C U When U Get There"? 14. Why do we need those ready-made Rice Krispies Treats, like, every day? 15. Is it because we saw ? play "Face Down" live last summer that we're screaming, Eddie Van Halen, eat TAFKAP's shorts? 16. Why does it seem as if the whole world is living for Will Smith right now-and that the whole world is mad late? 17. And why are we starting to have issues with

the way Today show's

time Warren G's "Smokin' Me Out" comes on? 20. We're definitely digging Nydia Rojas's rhythms, 1

still miss our

Selena?

radio every





SMOOTH

Seagram's Extra Dry

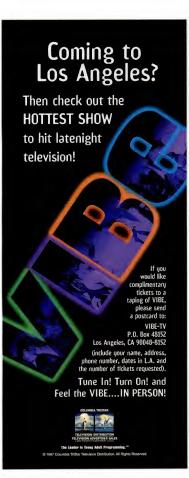
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#### THE DETAILS

Cover: Kirk Franklin

Maroon acctate crewneck shirt \$225 by Archtoour available at Loma Vista Hardware, Kansas City, Missouri;
black brushed cotton twill pant \$118 by CR by Cabrin Klini available at selected Macy's and Bloomingdale's

TOC: page 26

TO "Say Amen, Somebody!

Silver jersey V-neck shirt \$175 by Moschino Cheap & Chic available at Untitled, N.Y.C. and Moschino Boatique, N.Y.C. and Beverly Hills; black brushed cotton twill pant \$118 by CK by Calvin Klein available at select Macy's

page 83

Brown woof pinstripe suit \$1,235, whist cotton short-sleevedbutton-down shirt \$350, both by Dolce & Gabbana available at Dolce & Gabbana Boutique, N Y C.

page 94

Red wool/cashmere blazer \$1,420 and pant \$8,85 pt (sinni Versace Couture available at Versace Boutiques nationwide; black sheer acetate V-neck shirt \$180 by Arckitoure available at Loma Vista Hardware, Kansas City, Missouri.

#### SEFashion: "Class Act

Charcoal wood/carbon and two-button suit Soos and white button down shirt Sales both but Cabin Klain avail able at Calvin Klein N.C. and selected Saks Fifth Avenue nationwide

## Charcoal wool suit \$395 by Nautica by David Chu available at selected Lord & Taylors, Macy's nationwide; white button dress shirt \$85 by Folo by Raiph Lauren available at Folor Raiph Lauren, Beverly Hills and Salas fifth Avenue N.V.C; gray cotton tuttleneck \$86 by Polo Jeans Co. available at Bloomingdale's and Macy's

ide; charcoal wool zip-front sweater \$88 by GUESS? available at selected Blo page 130

Black wool tuttleneck sweater with yellow P \$135 by Polo by Ralph Lauren available at Polo/Ralph Lauren Beverly Hills and Bloomingdale's N.Y.C.; red and navy stripe cotton turtleneck and navy and yellow stripe turtleneck 5rx. both by Polo Jeans Co. available at Macy's and A&S stores nationwide.

#### page 131 Light blue cotton dress thirt \$48 by GUESS? available at Macy's, Stern's, and Bloomingdale's nationwide, navy wool V-neck sweater \$50 by Nautica by David Chu available at selected Lord & Taylors and Macy's nationwide; navy pinstripe pant \$78 by Tommy Hilfiger available at Macy's West and Bloomingdale's nation

page 132
White cotton dress shirt \$50, gray flannel pant \$130, both by Tommy Hilfiger, available at Bloomingdale's

Navy wool V-neck sweater \$98 and navy wool plaid pant \$195, both by Polo by Ralph Lauren available at Polo/Ralph Lauren N.Y.C. and Macy's N.Y.C.

#### VIBEStyle: "Childs Play

page 134

Navy cotton boy scout shirt \$68 by Mossimo available at Macy's West, Mossimo Supply, Costa Mesa & Pasadena, California; white brushed twill cargo pant \$57 by B.C. Ethic available at so nationwide and Home Brewed, New Jersey.

page 135

Olive rayon/nylon military shirt with epaulettes \$58 by Level 7 available at Cricket West, Ohio; beige coton, call 800-39-GUESS); tan cotton twill jacket \$35 by

#### ton twill cargo pant \$56 by GUESS? (for store info Dickies (for store information, call 800-DICKIES).

Deales (out store information), can conscribely age 136
Colorblock V-neck sweater 5s/s by Gene Myeer available as selected Saks Fifth Avenue and Marshall Fields
nationwide, brown rylon flights jeker 5azo by GUESS? available at GUESS? stores and Filene's nationwide; brown
contron rwill cargo paint 584 by Veno available at Fred Segal, Loc Angeles, California and Jimmy Jazz, N.Y.C.

page 137 Orange cotton T-shirt \$20 by Joe Boxer available at selected Macy's and Dillards stores nationwide; brown V-neck thermal top \$42 by GUESS? available at Macy's West and selected Bloominedale's nationwide; brown eotton drawstring cargo pant \$125 by DKNY available at Macy's Northeast and DB Dungaree, Miami.

#### The Stylist: "Helmut Lang"

pages 140-142

Black cotton shirt with satin sash \$271 available at Alan Bilzenan, MA and Magazine, Miami, Florida; black rubber cargo pant \$230 available at Untitled, N.Y.C.; black corton top with six elbows and back panel \$46 available at Untitled, N.Y.C. and Bacci Vancouve, B.C.; black secured dress \$53, available at Barney's, N.Y.C. and Bacci Vancouve, B.C.; black seads \$24, available at Emphastics, Putsburgh, and Bacci, Vancouver, B.C.; black seads \$24, available at Emphastics, Putsburgh, and death, with courts, no., Designers your with measurement on next sain \$343 awaisede all emphalics, Patthough, Ph, black subber cappo pant \$259 awaisable at Unitided, N.Y.C.; nade ejency top with white hem Siry available at Blue System, Misam, Flonda, and Anastasia, Newport, California; beige jency shirt with attached black sain \$594 awaisable at Emphature, Pittubugh, Pa.

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VIBE

Classified



From left: Karl Barton Florian Schneider, Wo g Flur, circa 1978

n German, their name means "power station." They were trained in the European classical canon. In performance and on album covers, they stood. mannequinilke, in matching outfits-robotic architects of a cold but brilliant supernova of electronic sonies. Coming from four fair-skinned Aryan knights, Kraftwerk's hyp-notic web of mechanical noise and hardware worship was 180 degrees from the sweat-drenched funk grooves of Soul Brother Number One. Yet, in the mid-170s, Kraftwerk LPs

resided in the crates of fearless South Bronx DJs right alongside those of James Brown. "I usually would dig

through a lot of bins for weird (records) based on the covers and names, turntable pioneer Afrika Bambaataa remembers. "And when I heard [Kraftwerk's] Trans-Europe Express, Isaid, Whoal This is some shit here!" In 1982 Bam and the Soulsonic Force's "Planet Rock" borrowed liberally from the West German quartet's 1977 homage to railway technology. The processed vocals, serie melody, and atmospheric blips and bleeps set off an electronic phase of hip hop that still resonates through the

thunderous 808 kicks of Miami's bass culture. "Trans-Europe

Express' was one record you couldn't cuttoo much," recalls Grandmaster Flash in David Toop's 1984 book The Rap Attack: African Jive to New York Hip Hop. "It was cutting itself. That shit was jumping off. Leave that shit alone, smoke a cigarette. You can go cool out; go to the bathroom," Into the '80s, old-

school hip hoppers continued looking for the perfect beat within Kraftwerk's computer world. "Man Machine," 1978's examination of modern dehumanization. supplied the musical basis for the Fearless Four's 1983 masterpiece "Rockin" It." "Numbers" (1981) hid a classic break amid its chaotic collection of pingponging sound effects.

N.Y.C.'s outdoor park jams may have been a universe away from the "Autobahn" (a moody paean to Germany's sonamed speed limit-less superhighway that was Kraftwerk's first smash, in 1975), but the enthusiastic endorsement of the group from the hip hop community epitomized a long-lost time when creativity and open-mindedness were the norm, never the exception. Kraftwerk haven't

recorded in more than 10 years, but a recent reunion at the Tribal Gathering uval outside London had 40,000 fans missing them and lamenting the demise of that golden era. "It became more apartheid, which is terri-ble," Bambaataa says. "Back in the '70s, early '80s, you would mix everything under one roof. One nation under a groove." Chairman Mao

184 VIBE



